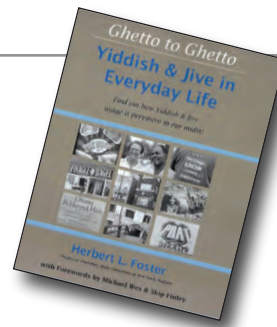




6—COARM tackles lengthy agenda



8—Reps hold meetings around the state



Back page—Retiree pens book on Yiddish, Jive usage

### Also inside:

- 2—In memoriam
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- 12-14—Benefits available
- 15—Honoring Johnson and the Harlem Hellfighters

# The Active Retiree

A Newsletter for Retiree Members of United University Professions

## Don't be fooled by the fearmongering

by Bill Scheuerman  
Oswego

Whenever Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Elizabeth Warren or anyone else calls for policies beneficial to most Americans, conservatives scream, “It’s socialism. The country’s going to hell!”

Don’t be fooled. This McCarthy-era fearmongering is an attempt to distract us from the socialism for the rich that is ruining America.

The recent Trump tax cut, 80 percent of which goes to the very wealthy, is a prime example of socialism for the rich. The tax giveaway increases the federal deficit by about \$100 billion annually, or \$1 trillion over the next decade, leading Trump and his Republican backers in congress to proclaim that the deficit now requires cuts to Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid and any other policy beneficial to people like us. Programs we desperately need, such as rebuilding our crumbling infrastructure and preparing for climate change, are unaffordable, they tell us. The con man in the White

House continually bellows about how his tax cuts benefit all of us by creating jobs and ending offshoring. Nonsense. Corporations are now investing overseas at a faster rate than ever before, and rather than allocating funds to create new jobs in the United States, American companies are spending their tax windfall on stock buy backs. By buying their own stocks, they reduce the number of shares on the market, thereby driving up the value of stocks the big shareholders own. As usual, they get richer, we pay the bill.

The recent “tax cut” favors the wealthy and punishes people in the blue states. Blue states, after all, elect politicians who promote policies beneficial to the working and middle classes. Think about the \$10,000 limit on state tax deductions. Want to hear more? The wealthiest Americans who earn an average of \$160 million a year are effectively taxed at a 3.5 percent rate. Most of us pay about 4 to 5 times that rate.

Policies that transfer income from the many to the few are apparently endless. Last year, the big banks that gave us the

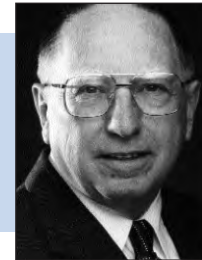
Great Recession and almost destroyed our retirement savings received an extra \$21 billion from the tax cut. According to former Labor Secretary Robert Reich, this financial windfall came on top of another \$83 billion gift the banks received. After getting \$600 million in federal contracts and another \$500 million in tax breaks, General Motors recently announced it was cutting 14,000 jobs. On the state level, states compete with each other to give tax dollars to corporations. Just look at New York’s willingness to give Amazon \$3 billion. It just wasn’t enough.

Newly elected members of the Democratic-controlled House challenge these income transfers whenever they introduce bills such as the Green New Deal that address pressing public issues. Opponents react with shouts of “It’s socialism”—meant to strike a negative note in the minds of voters.

Recognize this hysteria for what it really is: a desperate attempt to obscure reality by those who benefit from a status quo that takes from the many and gives to the few.

## Fond farewells

UUP mourns the loss of two elder statesmen:  
Mac Nelson of Fredonia, left, and Ed VanDuzer of Brockport.  
Read about their lives and legacies on pages 9 and 11.



# The Active Retiree

## UUP Officers

**Frederick E. Kowal**/President  
**Thomas J. Tucker**/VP for Professionals  
**Jamie F. Dangler**/VP for Academics  
**Jeri O'Bryan-Losee**/Secretary/Treasurer  
**Thomas C. Hoey**/Membership Dev. Officer

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**UUP Retiree Member Services Coordinator**  
 Walter Apple wapple@uupmail.org

**UUP Associate Director of Communications**  
 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.*

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[www.uupinfo.org](http://www.uupinfo.org)



Help UUP help SUNY students and the state university! Check out UUP's new social media advertising campaign, which calls on Albany lawmakers to close the TAP Gap! You can send an electronic letter at [FundTAP.org/now](http://FundTAP.org/now)

## In memoriam

Let us remember those who have passed away since August 2018:

**Albany**  
 Elizabeth Burns  
 Deirdre Carr  
 Robert Cartmell  
 Robert Nakamura  
**Alfred**  
 Thomas Burnard  
**Binghamton**  
 Charles Carpenter  
 David Thomas  
**Brockport**  
 Henry Bretton  
 Benita Jorkasky  
 Thomas Kallen  
 Edward Van Duzer  
**Buffalo Center**  
 David Bouman  
 Roger Burton  
 Thomas Fantauzzi  
 John Milligan  
 Ronald Raven  
 Thomas Shuell  
 Malcolm Slakter  
 P. Michael Terleck  
 Melvin Tucker  
**Buffalo HSC**  
 C. John Abeyounis  
 Robert McIssac  
 Virginia Muniak  
**Buffalo State**  
 Gary Heiman  
 Howard Meyer  
 Charles Wert  
**Cobleskill**  
 Lawrence Joyce  
 Sylvia Mallery  
 Thelma Turner  
**Cortland**  
 Florence Brush

William Sharp  
 Beulah Wang  
**Delhi**  
 Elizabeth Tiger, Delhi  
**Downstate Medical**  
 Eddy Dunn  
 Jorge Steinberg  
 Talah Bellin  
 Nicholas Falci  
 Lucille Horn  
 Shirley Kauffman  
 Bizhan Nia  
**Empire State**  
 Ellen Hawkes-Little  
 Thelma Jurgrau  
**ESF**  
 R. Drummer-Francis  
 Anatole Sarko  
**Farmingdale**  
 Gerard Dempsey  
 Paul Kramer  
 William Pfeiffer  
**Fredonia**  
 Malcolm Nelson  
 Margaret Pabst  
 William Proweller  
 James Symula  
**Morrisville**  
 Vera Littlejohn  
**New Paltz**  
 Vladimir Bakum,  
 John Hain  
 Rose Irvine  
 Eudora Kombo  
**Oneonta**  
 Donald Hill  
**Optometry**  
 Leonard Werner

**Oswego**  
 Robert Armeson  
 Richard Mattice  
 Herbert Van Schaac  
**Plattsburgh**  
 Robert Golden  
 James Holland  
 J. Clark Mitchell  
 Pauline Premore  
 Philip Reines  
 Douglas Skopp  
 Merton Stancliff  
**Potsdam**  
 Norman Licht  
 Charles Smith  
**Stony Brook**  
 Larry Coleman  
 Gaetano D'Angelo  
 Fabio Giron  
 Jack Heller  
 Carey Koleda  
 Marianne Lopiccolo  
 Gene Mundie  
 Craig Munn  
 Doreen Paul  
 Victorino Tejera  
**Stony Brook HSC**  
 Bexaida Cardona  
 Vincent Cirillo  
 Nicholas Lenn  
 Vita Mandel  
 Robert Povolny  
 Edward Reich  
 Thomas Smith  
**Upstate Medical**  
 Sandra Ahlers  
 Barbara Alteri  
 Anne Ryan

## From the COARM Chair

# A smorgasbord of healthy choices

**C**OARM—the Committee on Active Retired Membership—consists of the elected regional retiree members who serve you as a sort of an “executive board.” All other retiree members, or Active Retired Members, are the ARM of UUP retirees whom COARM represents.

COARM meets as a group at UUP Delegate Assemblies to discuss, argue and endorse UUP retiree issues. We do, however, keep in touch between DAs via all sorts of electronic methods; we sometimes even enjoy speaking with each other on telephonic gadgets.

We last met in Albany the first weekend of February 2019. We had an enormous smorgasbord of important issues that we dealt with that had some impact on the continuing quality of life you enjoy as SUNY retirees in UUP. All these issues will be available on the soon-to-be-activated UUP Retiree Web Page.

The *retiree* web page was among one of the primary matters we discussed. Charlie McAteer of Stony Brook and Otilie Woodruff of Buffalo are in the last stages of organizing the page to be posted soon. The web page will give everyone quick access to all of our publications, meeting schedules, history, and benefits information, with room for discussion of our issues. Add your ideas as they move forward with this new initiative.

Our financial report showed that we were in a good place and careful caretakers of your membership dues. COARM provides coverage for the life insurance, printed materials, most of the resources that provide for Walter Apple, the dedicated UUP retiree member services coordinator, the regional and campus

meetings that allow for face to face sharing of information and, occasionally, gripes and all our printed and electronic communications with you. It was decided that COARM would hold again a series of regional summertime retreats for the newly elected chapter Officers for Retirees to bring them the specific information needed to do great jobs. All this is yours via the \$50 annual dues. We seriously discussed the potential cost of a plastic membership card for yearly distribution, but decided to continue the process of providing a clippable membership card in *The Active Retiree*, which you receive only because you are a member.

There was vibrant and lively discussion around the proposed UUP constitutional change determining how one joins COARM at retirement. The language was unclear and did not represent the majority position of those discussing it. After a serious floor discussion by the delegates, active and retired, the amendment was sent back to committee for a rewrite.

One of the most important dishes on this smorgasbord table was the legislative priorities coming from the governor’s budget. This is a real smorgasbord that we ask you to be involved with and to pick and choose issues according to your tastes. On the table, as usual, was funding for full-time academic and professional staff—enrollment grows with programs and lines being cut at the same time. UUP is supporting restoring sufficient TAP awards to support our students; budget support for the university’s hospitals to cover Medicaid losses since the hospitals cannot turn patients away; and to require campus foundation transparency and accountability.



For retirees specifically, UUP is supporting the ending of Income Related Medicare Adjustment Amounts, the infamous IRMAA, reimbursement. Under current law, the state provides full reimbursement of Medicare Part B to all eligible NYS state retirees no matter what the income. As one who has enjoyed your retirement from SUNY with the dedicated support by UUP of your benefits, you will be asked to call, write and make local calls and visits to your state representatives. Please pay attention to all the information about how you can be involved as a retiree with discretionary time. Making a local visit to your senator’s or assemblyperson’s office is worth its weight of importance. It is not difficult to do and the results are rewarding.

UUP and COARM are offering you a smorgasbord of small dishes you can help us with.

Bon appetit!

## Postscripts ...

- P.S. COARM tried to arrange a west coast Florida meeting in March for residents. There was insufficient response to warrant the expense. Need snow bird contacts for next try.
- P.S. If you’re going to be a snowbird, give us your address so we can reach out to you for a meeting.
- P.S. As of January 2019, Durable Medical Equipment is covered

- by Medicare when doctor orders it as “medically necessary.”
- P.S. Review your Medicare statements. Report any charges not incurred by you. Help defeat fraud!
- P.S. Be cautious of peculiar telephone calls. Never give out your numerical contacts for Social Security, Medicare, pension or bank identifications.



# RETIREES

## MEMBER ORGANIZING INSTITUTE

*Paid fellowships to empower members to engage colleagues in conversations about UUP*

### WHO:

**UUP retiree members are encouraged to enroll in any of the upcoming NYSUT Member Organizing Institutes for Retirees.** Volunteers will be trained in member engagement and communications skills, and take a leading role in the campaign to promote members' rights and to fight for educational justice.

### WHAT:

Attendees should feel comfortable having on-to-one conversations with colleagues at their homes. The conversations should be engaging and are meant to build lasting relationships among union members.

All participants will be expected to:

- Commit to 18 or 12 (four-hour) shifts over the duration of the program
- Attend a two-day training sessions. (*Lodging and meals provided*)
- Accept observation and constructive feedback from and maintain regular communication with their assigned mentor throughout the program
- Be comfortable with the basic navigation of a smartphone
- Be on their feet walking for most of their shift, including in inclement weather and after dark. Driving between houses may be required as well.

**Fellows who complete the training and required work will receive an \$1,800 (18-shift option) or \$1,200 (12-shift option) stipend, plus reimbursement for travel.**

### WHEN & WHERE:

**April 15-16, Latham (NYSUT Headquarters)**  
**April 29-30, Long Island (NYSUT Nassau Regional Office)**  
**April 30-May 1, Western NY (NYSUT Williamsville Regional Office)**

### HOW:

**To apply, go to <https://tinyurl.com/RetireeMOIApplication>**  
Once accepted, you'll need to register for accommodations.

**DEADLINE TO APPLY: April 1, 2019**

**For more information, contact Yvette Gedeon at [ygedeon@uupmail.org](mailto:ygedeon@uupmail.org) or at (518) 640-6600**



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# Governments work to create illusion of safety

by Lawrence Wittner  
Albany

Ever since the U.S. atomic bombings of Japanese cities in August 1945, a specter has haunted the world—the specter of nuclear annihilation.

The latest report from the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, issued Jan. 24, reminds us that the prospect of nuclear catastrophe remains all too real. Citing the extraordinary danger of nuclear disaster, the editors and the distinguished panel of experts upon whom they relied reset their famous “Doomsday Clock” at two minutes to midnight.

This grim warning from the scientists is well-justified. The Trump administration has withdrawn the United States from the painstakingly-negotiated 2015 nuclear weapons agreement with Iran and is in the process of withdrawing from the 1987 Intermediate Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty with Russia. In addition, the 2010 New Start Treaty, which caps the number of strategic nuclear weapons held by the United States and Russia, is scheduled to expire in 2021, thus leaving no limits on the world’s largest nuclear arsenals for the first time since 1972. According to Trump, this agreement, too, is a “bad deal,” and his national security advisor, John Bolton, has denounced it as “unilateral disarmament.”

Furthermore, while nuclear arms control and disarmament agreements crumble, a major nuclear weapons buildup is underway by all nine nuclear powers. The U.S. government alone has embarked on an extensive “modernization” of its entire nuclear weapons complex, designed to provide new, improved nuclear weapons and upgraded or new facilities for their production. The cost to U.S. taxpayers has been estimated to run somewhere between \$1.2 trillion and \$2 trillion.

For his part, Russian President Vladimir Putin used his televised 2018 State of the Union address to laud his own nation’s ad-

vances in nuclear weaponry. Highlighting a successful test of Russia’s RS-28 Sarmat intercontinental ballistic missile with a payload of 15 nuclear warheads, he also boasted of developing a working laser weapon, a hypersonic missile, and a cruise missile powered by a nuclear reactor that could fly indefinitely. Putin noted that the hypersonic missile, called Kinzhal (or dagger), could maneuver while traveling at more than ten times the speed of sound, and was “guaranteed to overcome all existing ... anti-missile systems” and deliver a nuclear strike. The cruise missile, dis-



Wittner

played on video by Putin in animated form, was shown as circumventing U.S. air defenses and heading for the California coast.

When it comes to bellicose public rhetoric, probably the most chilling has come from Trump. In the summer of 2017, angered by North Korea’s missile

“The distinguished panel of experts ... reset their famous ‘Doomsday Clock’ at two minutes to midnight.”

— Albany Chapter retiree Lawrence Wittner

progress and the belligerent statements of its leaders, he warned that its future threats would be “met with fire and fury like the world has never seen.” The following year, referring to North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, he bragged: “I too have a Nuclear Button, but it is a much bigger and more powerful one than his.”

The problem that government officials have faced when engaged in this kind of missile-rattling behavior is public concern that it could lead to a disastrous nuclear war. Consequently, to soothe public anxiety about catastrophic nuclear destruction, they have argued that, paradoxically, nuclear weapons actually guarantee national security by deterring nuclear and conventional war.

But the efficacy of nuclear deterrence is far from clear. Indeed, despite their possession of nuclear weapons, India and Pakistan fought wars against one another, and, like the United States and the Soviet Union, came perilously close to sliding into a nuclear war. Furthermore, why has the U.S. government, armed (and ostensibly safe) with thousands of nuclear weapons, been so worried about Iraq, Iran, and North Korea acquiring them? Why does it need additional nuclear weapons?

Beginning in 1983, Ronald Reagan—under fierce public criticism for his nuclear buildup and disturbed that U.S. nuclear weapons could not prevent a Soviet nuclear weapons attack—initiated a nuclear safety program of a different kind: missile defense. Called the Strategic Defense Initiative (but derided by Senator Edward Kennedy as “Star Wars”), the program involved shooting down incoming nuclear missiles before they hit the United States, thus freeing Americans from any danger of nuclear destruction.

From the start, scientists doubted the technical feasibility of a missile defense system and, also, pointed out that, even if it worked to some degree, an enemy nation could overwhelm it by employing additional missiles or decoys. Nevertheless, missile

defense had considerable appeal, especially among Republicans, who seized upon it as a crowd-pleasing alternative to nuclear arms control and disarmament.

The result was that, by the beginning of 2019, after more than 35 years of U.S. government development work at the cost of almost \$300 billion, the United States still did not have a workable missile defense system. In numerous scripted U.S. military tests—attempts to destroy an incoming missile whose timing and trajectory were known in advance—the system failed roughly half the time.

Nevertheless, apparently because there’s no policy too flawed to abandon if it enriches military contractors and reduces

see NUCLEAR, page 7

# COARM report from 2019 Winter DA

by Loraine Tyler  
Oneonta

The following are draft minutes of the COARM meeting held during the union's 2019 Winter Delegate Assembly, Feb. 3, in Albany.

Present: Jo Schaffer, chair; Sandra Harper and Otilie Woodruff, presidential appointees

COARM: Al Magid, Capital District; Charlie McAteer, Long Island; Stacey Johnson, Western NY; Bill Borgstede, Central NY; Membership Development Officer Tom Hoey, officer liaison

ARM: Richard Tyler, Eloise Briere, Judith Wishnia, Robert Krasprak, David Carey, Charles Wrigley, Jeri Anne Jerminario, Horace Ivey, Frank Goldsmith, Greg Threatte, Sandra Spier, Gwen Veira, Michael Woodruff, Glenn McNitt, Henry Steck, Shirley Patterson, Henry Flax, Linda Panter, Lisa Yates, Ray Guydosh, Harvey Inventasch and Harvey Axlerod

Guest: President Fred Kowal

Staff: Elizabeth Hough, counsel to the president; Yvette Gedeon, assistant to the MDO; and Walter Apple, retiree member services coordinator

- Welcome to all from Schaffer.
- President Kowal joined the meeting to clarify questions regarding the proposed constitutional amendments

- Fall 2018 minutes (October 5, 2018)

Charles McAteer and Al Magid made the motion to accept the minutes as amended. Passed.

## Chair's report

- Chapter Elections for Retiree Officer
  - One needed from each chapter
  - Term is two years
  - Duties: hold pre-retirement seminars, mail retiree packet to new retirees, activate retirees, Q and A

- Problem getting names of retirees from Human Resources

- Elected representative from North Country has not participated since election. The secretary-treasurer and president will examine bylaws to see



KAREN L. MATTISON PHOTOS

Above, COARM Chair Jo Schaffer leads a meeting of statewide retirees. Listening in is Linda Panter of Alfred.



Left, UUP President Fred Kowal talks with COARM members about several proposed constitutional amendments on the DA agenda.

if succession is prescribed.

- Problem for seniors: obligations for student loans may be garnished from Social Security for non-payment. If you know anyone who has had wages garnished should be reported to Apple and Schaffer.

## Treasurer's Report—Rich Tyler

- As of Dec. 31, 2018, COARM is financially sound.

Beginning Balance:	\$451,355.48
Revenue:	\$250,697.74
Expenses:	\$ 76,199.62
Ending Balance;	\$625,853.60
Report accepted.	

## Regional Reports

- McAteer and Magid moved that future meetings listed below be funded. Passed.

- Capital District: Meeting for Albany, New Paltz, Cobleskill and System Administration, May 7.

- Southern District: Three meetings are scheduled for Oneonta/Delhi, Binghamton and Cortland this spring.

- Metropolitan: A March meeting is planned for Downstate Medical, Maritime, Optometry and Purchase.

- North Country: One or two meetings will be held in the spring for Canton, Plattsburgh and Potsdam.

- Long Island: Two meetings will be held in April for Farmingdale and Old Westbury, and for Stony Brook and Stony Brook HSC.

- Western NY: Three meetings will be held Buffalo Center; Buffalo State; and Geneseo, Brockport, Fredonia and Alfred.

- Out of state: St. Petersburg, Fla., and Fort Myers, Fla., organized by Schaffer, and New Orleans, if numbers justify L. Tyler and Magid moved to fund. Passed.

- Need to have a discussion regarding geographical proliferation of meetings. Are numbers adequate to justify a meeting?



## Old Business

- Web page report—McAteer

Proposal is going forward. Most of what we've requested is already written. We will work with Karen Mattison regarding content. Goal to have the site ready by summer.

## New Business

- Constitutional amendments

— Article XIII 10b: Question of membership before retiring. Should one be a member at least one year immediately before retirement, for three or five years? Should two issues be separated prior to vote?

- Membership Cards: Very expensive to produce and mail individual cards. In the last issue of *The Active Retiree*, a bifold card was printed. Check to see what ID number applies to retirees. MDO Hoey will check into the issue.

- Summer Retreat, including officers for retirees and regional representatives
  - 1½ days held in three areas: Westchester, Syracuse, and Western NY
  - Funding approved.

- Roles of retirees and local advocacy
  - MOI (Membership Organizing Institute) training for activating retirees in regard to membership. Funding is from NYSUT. Three training sessions will be held: April 15-16, April 29-30, April 30-May 1. This is a paid position (see related flier, page 4).

- In district advocacy: February 14-15, March 8, and March 15.

- Hearing aids—There are desktop telephones that are available for free

through Caption Call; the phones work similar to closed captioning. Must be referred by an audiologist. Good information to share at regional meetings.

— Issue that our COARM chair is on the statewide Executive Board, but does not have a vote. It is customary for unions to rule that no retiree representative will be entitled to vote on union budgets, terms and conditions of employment, or contract issues. On any other matter, COARM believes the retiree board member should have the right to vote. This change would require a constitutional amendment.

— A resolution for a single-payer health system was passed around. This is to be considered at the 2019 Spring DA.

— Optometry Chapter retiree Robert Kasprak has been appointed to the Senior Action Council and will attend three meetings. No payment is made for travel. Russell moved and McAteer seconded a motion to approve travel funds. Passed.

— Health and safety issue was discussed.

Meeting adjourned at 9:35 a.m.



Gwen Veira and Michael Woodruff, both of Buffalo State, look over COARM materials during the committee meeting.



Stacey Johnson of Buffalo Center and Frank Goldsmith of Stony Brook HSC review several proposed constitutional amendments during the COARM meeting at the Winter DA.

## NUCLEAR ...

(continued from page 5)

public demands for nuclear disarmament, in mid-January 2019 Trump announced plans for a vast expansion of the U.S. missile defense program. According to the president, the goal was “to ensure that we can detect and destroy any missile launched against the United States—anywhere, any time, any place.”

Even so, all is not lost. Leading Democrats—including presidential hopefuls—have demanded that Trump keep the United States within the INF Treaty and scrap plans to expand the U.S.

nuclear arsenal. Adam Smith, the new chair of the House Armed Services Committee, has called for “a nuclear weapons policy that reduces the number of weapons and reduces the likelihood of any sort of nuclear conflict.”

Using their control of the House of Representatives, Democrats could block funding for the administration’s nuclear weapons programs.

And with enough public pressure, they might do that.

*(Lawrence Wittner is a professor of history emeritus at the University at Albany and the author of Confronting the Bomb, Stanford University Press.)*

# COARM and retiree news from the chapters, regions

## Capital District

by **Al Magid**  
Albany

On Oct. 17, Capital District COARM held its semi-annual fall 2018 forum/brunch in UAlbany's Alumni House. Participants included SUNY retirees from the Albany, Cobleskill, New Paltz and System Administration chapters.

The forum topic was "Supreme Court Roundup."

Featured speakers were Vincent M. Bonventre, distinguished professor in the Albany Law School, and Laura Wittner-Keller, Ph.D., a lecturer in the department of history at UAlbany.

The speakers dealt with many aspects of the topic, among them the importance of personality, ideology, and political affiliation and perspective in the Supreme Court's makeup and behavior—past, present, and likely in the foreseeable future—and perhaps beyond—and the influence upon individual justices and the institutional Court of social, political, and economic conditions in the nation. Apropos, the speakers flagged and examined some key cases in the Court record all the way back to *Marbury vs. Madison* (1803), where Chief Justice John Marshall propounded the principle of "Judicial Review," thereby underlining the authority and great power of the judicial branch in the American constitutional and political systems alongside the legislative and executive branches.

A robust Q & A followed the two presentations: a complimentary lunch was provided by statewide COARM.

A UUP retiree member services officer was on hand to speak about retiree benefits.

The Capital District Region's Executive Committee has organized the semi-annual spring 2019 forum/brunch, to be held in UAlbany's Alumni House on Tuesday, May 7, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Two guest speakers, Jonathan Rubin, NYSUT's director of field services, and Larry Wittner, emeritus professor of history at UAlbany, will address "Do Unions Have A Future?"

## Metropolitan/Downstate

by **Sandy Spier**  
Downstate Medical Center

Downstate retirees met in an "eat and greet" in Brooklyn, and heard a guest speaker address the topic, "Big Pharma and You: What You Can Do."

Today's attention on single payer health insurance and "Improved Medicare for All" provided the impetus for a good turnout: 17 retirees listened, asked questions and offered many comments on the topic.

Our speaker was an activist union member, Neal Frumkin. Frumkin is a New York City retiree and a trustee for the DC 37 Health & Security Fund, which provides the DC 37 prescription drug benefits. He has compiled information from many sources and authored articles organizing against the excessive Big Pharma pricing.

He related some of the well-known price increases, such as

the Turing Pharmaceutical generic drug Daraprim (the cost went from \$13.50 to \$750 per tablet in one move). He also noted that drug prices are scandalously unregulated, and how some people forgo taking their medication. High drug prices also cause union prescription drug providers to pass the cost on to their members or go bankrupt.

As to what to do: He said educate our members and the community; adopt resolutions in our unions and organizations calling for legislation to regulate the drug industry; and join with community and union members to take the pharmaceuticals.

## Western New York



William Revelas, left, an emergency drill coordinator/safety inspector with the Department of Environment, Health and Safety, and a department rep for the Buffalo Center Chapter, speaks with a fellow chapter member and COARM Chair Jo Schaffer, right.

by **Jo Schaffer**  
COARM Chair

UUP Retiree Member Services Coordinator Walter Apple drove from Albany and Jo Schaffer from Cortland to be in Buffalo for a pre-retirement meeting organized at the University at Buffalo campus Feb. 13-14.

At noon, there were almost 200 RIT's (Retirees in Training) in attendance. At the door, the chapter assistant checked off the names, giving members their new union membership cards, and "using the occasion" to sign up non-members. This was a member-only event, with a box lunch available. During Apple's presentation, there was rapt attention—not a sound—but loads of questions, which he fielded with professional aplomb. A great member development occasion!

At 4 p.m., there was a dinner meeting of UB retirees. It provided a good opportunity to see and talk with old union friends. UB Chapter President Ezra Zubrow, Schaffer, Western NY regional representative Stacey Johnson and Apple reminded attendees that their comfortable retirement was due in large part to UUP over the years—fighting for good contracts and benefits, many of which carry over to retirement.

On Friday morning, we were at the UB Educational Opportunity Center downtown for another pre-retirement session. Questions galore and even some on active rights and benefits. Happy to oblige!

A Buffalo State meeting for UUP retirees was held Friday at 2 p.m.. Buffalo State Chapter President Dean Reinhart encouraged more participation in local advocacy in all forms—visits, letters, calls, etc., to elected officials.



## Delegates pay tribute to Nelson

**M**ac Nelson was a dedicated union man who wasn't afraid to work to make UUP into a union that he could proudly call his own.

But for all that Nelson did for UUP, his greatest gift was his voice.

"I think my best contribution to UUP," Nelson wrote in a 2015 essay, "Sing Out!" published in *The Active Retiree*, "is that, three times a year, when we meet to conduct our business, we open the meeting with me (usually) leading (others) in song."

Nelson passed away Dec. 25 at Brooks Memorial Hospital in Fredonia.

"Mac was an elder, a good friend, and a dedicated unionist," said UUP President Fred Kowal. "Mac served his union with distinction and devotion. He will be missed, especially at Delegate Assemblies where he led the 'Mac-ettes' in the singing of 'Solidarity Forever.'"

Nelson wrote about how he loved the line "Solidarity forever, for the union makes us strong!" and believed singing held the same power: "I know that, after I am gone, they will still sing."

And they did.

Delegates to the 2019 Winter DA paid tribute to Nelson with the reading of a resolution honoring his life and legacy, followed by the singing of his cherished song of solidarity.

### Paying tribute

"There has only been one Mac for me, for our history, for our professions, for our union, and for all of us who were touched by his presence," said statewide COARM Chair Jo Schaffer, who with Judy Wishnia of Stony Brook read the resolution.

Wishnia said that Nelson was one of the "original builders" of the union, but was quick to point out that there "was more to Mac than his union activity. He was a great teacher, a great writer, a wonderful traveler, and all with a great sense of humor."

A video of Nelson was shown at the DA. It can be viewed at <https://bit.ly/2NSt9vP>

### Be it further resolved ...

The resolution read as follows:

"Whereas, Malcolm A. Nelson was a fac-

ulty member in the English Department at SUNY Fredonia from 1968 to 2007, receiving the SUNY Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching in 1975, and earning the rank of Distinguished Teaching Professor in 1984; and

"Whereas, Mac's noteworthy service to the union began in 1969 with his role as a founder and first president of the State University Federation of Teachers, which merged with the Senate Professional Association to form what is now UUP, essentially contributing to the formative years of this organization; and

"Whereas, Mac diligently served as Fredonia Chapter President for more than a decade between 1972 and 1992, as Grievance Officer during the 1970s, as Vice President for Academics from 1974-1976 and 1980-1982, as VOTE-COPE Director from 1978-1982, as Newsletter Editor for more than 20 years, as English Department Rep from 1969-1994, as Membership Development Officer in the 1990s, as Secretary from 1992-1994, and as a Delegate until his untimely death on December 25, 2018; and

"Whereas, Mac was committed to a strong, vibrant union as a founding member and fervent supporter of the Reform Caucus, which bolstered his election to the statewide Executive Board, on which he served from 1979-1984 and again from 1993-1995; and

"Whereas, Mac served as a NYSUT Director from 1980-1982, on several statewide committees—including Membership and Constitution Study—and was a longtime member of the Dunkirk-area AFL-CIO; and

"Whereas, Mac was awarded his union's pre-eminent honor, the Nina Mitchell Award for Distinguished Service, in 1995; and

"Whereas, Mac was a prolific writer, focusing his talents on Native American culture, Cape Cod, and Route 20, the highway on which he lived in Brocton, Chautauqua County; and

"Whereas, Mac's sense of humor was apparent in everything he did, most notably in his musings on topics ranging from



Above, members of the "Mac-ettes" sing *Solidarity Forever* in honor of Nelson, who died unexpectedly Dec. 25. Top, Nelson leads the singing at a 2011 DA.

cleavage wars (female TV anchors) and politics, to Yellowstone National Park and his favorite authors, which became a staple in *The Active Retiree*, the newsletter for retiree members of UUP; and

"Whereas, Mac never missed an opportunity to share stories about his beloved Chicago Cubs, including how deliriously happy he was to throw out the first pitch at a Cubbies game at age 77, and how disappointed he was to have fallen asleep on the night his Cubs—finally!—won the World Series in 2016; and

"Whereas, Mac distinguished himself as a voice for his colleagues, the campus and the community; and

"Whereas, Mac organized and led for more than 60 years a vocal group called The Catch Club, which met monthly to sing catches, canons, and glees, mostly from the 17th century; and

"Whereas, Mac's deep love of music was evident with each rousing rendition of *Solidarity Forever*, which he sang, along with the Mac-ettes, at the start of each Delegate Assembly; therefore be it

"Resolved, that the UUP Delegates to the 2019 Winter Delegate Assembly honor the life and service of Brother Mac Nelson by raising their voices in the singing of *Solidarity Forever*; and be it further

"Resolved, that the Delegates direct the President of UUP to convey this resolution to Mac's family."

# Pearl H. Brod Outstanding 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**

*Applications will only be accepted via email.*

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

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

UUP Chapter \_\_\_\_\_ Year retired from SUNY \_\_\_\_\_

**III. Nominee Activities** *(If additional space is needed, use attached sheet.)*

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

\_\_\_\_\_

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

\_\_\_\_\_

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

\_\_\_\_\_

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

\_\_\_\_\_

**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 at the Fall Delegate Assembly.*

**Applications will only be accepted via email. Email completed nomination form, including letters of endorsement, to:**

**UUP Retiree Services Coordinator  
Walter Apple at [wapple@uupbenefits.org](mailto:wapple@uupbenefits.org)**

**DEADLINE: April 15**



## UUP mourns loss of Brockport's Ed VanDuzer

**E**dward VanDuzer—who was hailed by his former colleagues as a man of principle, integrity and competence—died Feb. 11 in Arkansas, where he lived with his wife Joan. He was 83.

VanDuzer retired from SUNY Brockport as an associate professor of business, after 38 years teaching geography and marketing.

He earned the union's highest honor, the Nina Mitchell Award for Distinguished Service.

VanDuzer's fellow UUP members remember and appreciate his longstanding determination to serve the union—even if his actions often put him in precarious positions with SUNY administrators.

His colleagues recalled how, in 1983, VanDuzer fought for dozens of UUP members caught in a web of massive retrenchments as entire college departments were eliminated.

“Ed has exemplified civic virtue in his service to the members of the Brockport chapter and to the union at large,” wrote Brockport UUPer John Chasse in nominating VanDuzer for the Mitchell Award in 2001. “He has willingly served when it imposed personal costs and when it involved personal risk.”

During the infamous retrenchments of 1983, VanDuzer embarked on his first of 16 years as chapter president, from which he took a brief hiatus from 1991-1993 when he served as chapter vice president for academics. He was treasurer from

1979-1983 and was vice president for membership the five years prior.

VanDuzer is credited with helping to establish a campus labor/management committee for professional development and with creating an invoice/ledger system to track chapter finances. He also co-chaired two outplacement workshops for SUNY-wide retrenchees.

On the statewide level, VanDuzer from 1992-93 chaired the Membership Committee, and is a past member of the Legislation, Chapter Presidents and Negotiations committees. He served as editor of the chapter newsletter, as chapter VOTE/COPE coordinator and as a UUP delegate.

VanDuzer earned a Chancellor's Award for Excellence in 1991.

“I send my condolences to Ed's family and friends,” noted Brockport colleague Bud Meade. “As personnel director at Brockport when Ed was the president of UUP, I held him in highest esteem for his integrity and commitment to the people he represented. We were able to solve many problems as a result of his efforts to ensure just solutions that were satisfactory to all parties: involved employees, management and the union. I have fond memories of working with him and I am sorry to learn of his death.”

VanDuzer was born April 27, 1935, in



VanDuzer

Brooklyn, and lived in Connecticut, where he met his wife at Teachers College of Connecticut. He earned his MA and Ph.D. at the University of Iowa and an MBA at Rochester Institute of Technology.

VanDuzer served in many ministerial positions in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. He enjoyed camping and took his

family on many camping trips across the U.S., and on one memorable trip to Calgary, Canada.

He was a Scoutmaster for more than 10 years, ensuring that his four sons earned their Eagle Scout awards. Five of his children served in the U.S. military.

He was predeceased by his parents Howard C. and Lillian (Doran) VanDuzer and daughter Barbara.

He is survived by his brothers Howard (Faith) VanDuzer, Thomaston, Conn., and Richard (Josephine) VanDuzer, Fort Meyers Fla. He is survived by his wife of 63 years Joan Barbour VanDuzer, children Jay (Christine) VanDuzer, Oklahoma City, Dr. Timothy VanDuzer, Henderson, Nev., Daniel (Theresa Jasen) VanDuzer, Spencerport, N.Y., Linnea (Brian) Briscoe, Greencastle, Ind., Nathan (Elizabeth) VanDuzer, Dover, Mass., Sarah (Scott) Sanchez, Farmington, Ariz., Vermena (Jason) Lee, Collegeville, Penn., 25 grandchildren and 12 great grandchildren.

### Get the *Organizing Your Vital Records* booklet

Having all your personal information in one place can make it easier to deal with the unexpected.

COARM has created a checklist designed to be an organizational tool that will help you and your family more easily navigate moments of change. It will also assist you in aggregating your important data.

“We hope this document helps give you a view of your vital information, and some measure of peace of mind for

you and those you hold dear,” said COARM Chair Jo Schaffer.

The document can be found on the UUP website at <https://bit.ly/2E1jNHx> or by contacting Walter Apple, retiree member services coordinator, at [wapple@uupmail.org](mailto:wapple@uupmail.org) or at (800) 342-4206.







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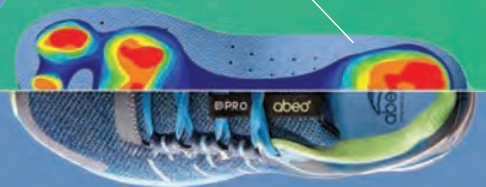
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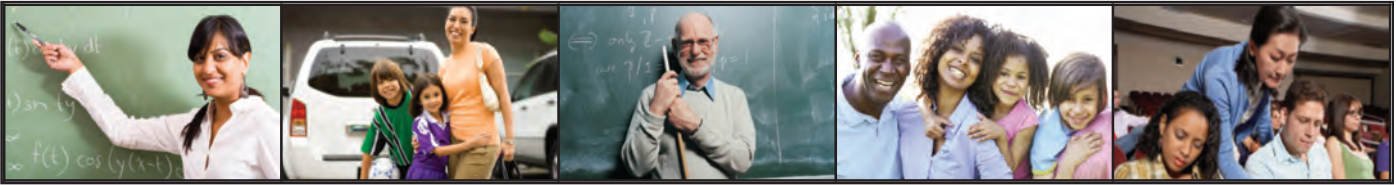
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The following is just a sampling of the endorsed programs & services available to UUP bargaining unit members & their families:

- **Financial Services**
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- **Competitive Savings Rates**
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- **Sports & Concert Tickets**
- **Theme Park Discounts**
- **Car Buying Service**
- **Heating Oil & Propane Savings**



To learn more about Member Benefits-endorsed programs & services, visit ***memberbenefits.nysut.org*** or call **800-626-8101**.



# Honoring Pvt. Henry Johnson and the Harlem Hellfighters

by Daniel Scott Marrone  
Farmingdale

**O**n April 6, 1917, when the U.S. declared war on Imperial Germany, Henry Johnson answered his nation's call to duty. He was nearly 22 years old, and married with children. He wished to join the U.S. Army, but African-Americans were excluded from so-called "White" regiments.

Johnson heard that a "Black" regiment existed in New York City. He enlisted in this military unit, the 15th New York Infantry National Guard Regiment, later known as the highly decorated Harlem Hellfighters.

The "15th New York" was ordered in October 1917 to South Carolina for combat training. These Empire State soldiers instantly clashed with bigoted shopkeepers, who refused to serve them. The U.S. Army feared that violence would occur and re-assigned the 15th New York to New York City with less than two weeks of combat training. The War Department was content in curtailing combat training for these soldiers because the "Black" regiment would serve as stevedores to load and unload cargo ships.

The 15th New York arrived in France in January 1918. As planned, the 15th New York soldiers served as stevedores. This was unacceptable.

## Fighting for the French

Fortunately, an opportunity arose for the 15th New York to fight under French command. After three years of deadly trench warfare and mutinies, the French army was near collapse. Loaning black U.S. Army soldiers helped the French and alleviated an interracial problem for the Army.

The 15th New York was deployed to defend Paris. Soldiers under French command could not fly any national flag other than the tricolor of France.

By May 1917, the Germans had already overrun northeast France and were probing defenses of Paris by sending out raiding platoons. On sentry duty in a forward "listening position" on the outskirts of Paris were 15th New York Pvt. Henry Johnson and Pvt. Needham Roberts. They

were to alert French commanders of a Germans attack. At about 3 a.m., Johnson and Roberts heard the barbed wire being cut, and knew they were about to be attacked. The two were armed with hand grenades and French-made Lebel rifles. Johnson also had an 8.5-pound "Bolo" knife. The two began tossing grenades. After the grenades ran out, Johnson fired his rifle. Roberts ran for help but was shot; Johnson pulled the wounded Roberts back into the trench.

## Immense bravery

The Germans soon surrounded the two sentries. Amidst the melee, Johnson's rifle jammed. The Germans grabbed Roberts. Johnson attacked using his inoperable rifle as a club. After repeatedly bashing the Germans, Johnson's rifle fell apart. He resorted to his "Bolo" knife and began slashing, all while being clubbed, shot and bayoneted by the raiders. Though he sustained 21 wounds to his face, chest, arms and legs, Johnson kept fighting until the Germans fled. At that point, he collapsed. When French troops arrived, they found Johnson and Roberts prostrate amid four dead Germans. Also seen were damaged and discarded weapons and gear for approximately a dozen soldiers. Most telling were the substantial blood trails leading back to enemy lines. With his valor, Pvt. Johnson prevented an entire German raiding platoon from breaching French front lines. And he also saved Robert's life.

Johnson was awarded the French Croix de Guerre avec bronze Palme et Étoile d'Or, the equivalent of the U.S. Distinguished Service Cross and Congressional Medal of Honor.

The French nicknamed Henry Johnson "Black Death" and his regiment the "Harlem Hellfighters."

On Feb. 17, 1919, the Harlem Hellfighters marched in New York City's Victory Parade. By then, Johnson recovered from his wounds except for his feet, which were permanently injured, leaving him barely



Marrone

able to walk. To add insult to his injuries, the U.S. Army filed no notation of his valor and battlefield wounds in his official service records. As a result, he was ineligible for the Purple Heart and, importantly, was at first denied a military disability pension.

He turned to alcohol and was estranged from his wife and family. By the mid-1920s, Johnson was a home-

less alcoholic suffering from tuberculosis.

On Sept. 16, 1927, Johnson was brought to the Veterans' Hospital in Washington, D.C., and received disability and a military pension. He died from tuberculosis and myocarditis on July 1, 1929, and was buried in Arlington National Cemetery.

## Finally, recognition

It took more than six decades for his bravery to be recognized. In 1991, a huge granite monument topped with the bronze likeness of Henry Johnson in uniform was erected in Albany's Washington Park, and a section of highly trafficked Northern Boulevard in New York's capital city was renamed "Henry Johnson Boulevard."

In June 1996, President Bill Clinton posthumously awarded Johnson the Purple Heart.

In 2003, the U.S. Army posthumously awarded Johnson the nation's second highest honor, the Distinguished Service Cross. A year later, a postal facility in Albany was renamed the "United States Postal Service Henry Johnson Annex."

In September 2007, the City of Albany dedicated the Henry Johnson Charter School. Young students at the school repeatedly say: "We will succeed because Henry Johnson made us free!"

On June 2, 2015, President Barack Obama in a White House ceremony acknowledged the outstanding bravery of Pvt. Henry Johnson in WWI with the U.S. Congressional Medal of Honor.

*(Daniel Scott Marrone, Ph.D., is a distinguished service professor emeritus from SUNY Farmingdale.)*

## Book review: Yiddish, jive and the joy of discovery

**H**erbert Foster has never seen the movie *Shrek*. Yet, “Many Yiddish and Jive words have double meanings,” he said. “Shrek is a Yiddish word meaning fear.”

Foster—a professor emeritus, Graduate School of Education, SUNY Buffalo—grew up in Brooklyn and his Jewish family heritage cultivated his lifelong interest in Yiddish. His interest in Jive started when he was teaching graphic arts in a New York City “600” School.

As part of his dissertation, Foster dug into the history of Jive and realized it had a similar place in black culture as Yiddish does in Jewish culture. Both, he said, have introduced new terms and phrases into the English lexicon.

“Every group that came to America contributed their words to American English, but Jews and blacks have contributed more words than any other groups,” he said. There are Yiddish and Jive dictionaries, but no one ever put

them into one book.

Foster expects that to change when readers obtain his new book *Ghetto to Ghetto: Yiddish and Jive in Everyday Life*. It provides a one-chapter dictionary of Yiddish and Jive terms that permeate conversations today, such as “get-go” and “maven.” Also included are chapters: Gentile Yiddish Speakers (James Cagney, Ralph Ellison and Fiorello LaGuardia) and Shabbos Goys: Gentiles who do deeds on the Sabbath for Orthodox Jews (former presidents Harry Truman and Barack Obama, Justice Thurgood Marshall, and author Pete Hamill).

Former Secretary of State Colin Powell explained in a letter to Foster why he speaks some Yiddish: “I worked part time at a Jewish-owned toy store for several years as a teenager.”



Foster

There is a chapter on Black Community Social Groups, too.

“You listen to TV and read newspapers today and you’ll find that Yiddish and Jive usage are omnipresent, particularly in advertisements,” Foster wrote. For example, a TV as for Preparation H takes place in the town of **TOOKUS** {tuchus in Yiddish=rear end/butt}.

Foster hopes those reading his book will “chuckle over some of the familiar words or behaviors or get emotional from fond memories for those long gone.”

Foster is currently working on two projects: a travel book, *Schlepping Around Martha’s Vineyard*; and a study of the historical plaques on Martha’s Vineyard.

*Ghetto to Ghetto: Yiddish and Jive in Everyday Life* will soon be available from Amazon.