



5—Marrone writes about 1911 Triangle Shirtwaist fire



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The Active Retiree

A Newsletter for Retiree Members of United University Professions

Why I'm voting for 'Medicare For All'

by Judith Wishnia
Stony Brook

Several years ago, while walking on a cobblestone street in Paris, I tripped, fell and hit my head on the sidewalk. As with many head wounds, the blood was flowing.

Lucky for me, a young couple stopped, called the emergency number and within a few minutes, an ambulance from the fire department arrived. (The fire department is one of the emergency services in Paris.) They gave me a quick examination to see how serious it was and decided I just needed a few stitches. So off to an emergency room, where the nice fireman waited with me until I was admitted, all of about five minutes. It was a Saturday afternoon and the room was crowded. But after an hour, I was seen and stitched up.

I thanked the doctor and asked where I could pay. Oh, of course, there is no fee, said the doctor. I explained that I was not part of the French medical system and he said he would send a bill. We eventually

got the bill: 50 euro (\$63). He gave me a prescription in case I had pain. The pharmacist also said there was no fee, but my husband again explained that we were not in the system. Oh, that will be 4 euro (\$5.30).

Fast forward: Several weeks ago, I tripped on the step coming out of my garage and, once again, hit my head. I must have a hard head because there is now a huge hole indicating where I hit the wall. I felt fine and went on to cook dinner. But my two adult granddaughters insisted that I go to the emergency room to see if I had internal bleeding. I refused, but after a teary (on their part) dinner, I agreed.

At the ER, they did two CT scans and six hours later—after I told them that my granddaughter was falling asleep and could not drive—they finally gave me the results. I was fine.

Not long after, I got the bill: \$7,039.57! \$2,748 for the visit and the remainder for the tests and drugs. Happily our wonder-

ful retiree health plans paid for most of it. I paid \$70. But I was enraged. Well, this morning (Sept,10), *The New York Times* had an op ed by a professor of public policy (Glenn Melnick) entitled: Limit Hospital Pricing Power.

"There are many reasons Americans pay more for health care than any other country," he wrote. "But one of the most powerful forces driving cost increases is buried in a little known set of regulations concerning emergency room care. These regulations have granted hospitals what is essentially a monopoly over emergency room patients, allowing them to charge whatever they want."

I will be voting for candidates who support Medicare-for-all. Despite the Trumpian propaganda that it will raise the cost of medical care, the truth is: It will cost less, not only because of lower administrative costs but also because the regulations which allow these high costs, will be changed. The Melnick article ends with

see MEDICARE, page 9

What your beneficiaries need to know



Don't forget to remind your beneficiaries that, upon your death, they need to inform the campus Human Resources Department and contact UUP Retiree Member Services Coordinator Walter

Apple at (800) 342-4206. If they don't contact the campus or UUP, they won't get the survivor's benefits: that's \$3,000 from the state and \$1,000 from UUP. Remind them to make the calls!

The Active Retiree

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

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ALICIA FINK

Brockport Chapter retiree Herb Fink, above left, puts away the ball in the 2019 Empire State Senior Games pickleball competition, held June 13 on the SUNY Cortland campus. Fink and his doubles



partner, John Gardner, won a gold medal in the 80-plus category. (Fink was quick to point out that he's a mere 79 but, under the rules, players are entered by the age they'll be at the end of the year.) Fink participated in the Senior Games in 2012, 2013 and 2014, earning one Gold and two Silver medals in racquetball. Inset, Fink's "cheering section," from right to left, wife Alicia, Fink, son Andrew and Andrew's longtime girlfriend Michelle Grossman.

In memoriam

Let us remember those who have passed away since February 2019:

Marjorie Benedict, Albany	Johannes Smid, ESF
Robert Burgess, Albany	Hyman Lieblich, Farmingdale
Alexander Fischler, Binghamton	Fayez Samuel, Farmingdale
Suhair Muhammad, Binghamton	Frances Polito, Fredonia
Lewis Mandell, Buffalo Center	Dietmar Schenitzki, Geneseo
Marion Goldstein, Buffalo State	J. Douglas Deal, Oswego
Om Rustgi, Buffalo State	James Jerose, Oswego
Catherine Kelly, Canton	Raymond O'Donnell, Oswego
Frederick Guay, Cobleskill	Lendall Haskell, Plattsburgh
Donna Anderson, Cortland	Carole Torok, Polytechnic Institute
Samuel Forcucci, Cortland	Neal O'Brien, Potsdam
Thomas Banks, Delhi	Patricia Jones, Stony Brook
Gennaro Pellegrino, Delhi	Robert Kerber, Stony Brook
Arlene Milstein, Downstate Medical	Rose Marie Fichter, Stony Brook HSC
George Varughese, Downstate Medical	Teresa Di Lorenzo, Upstate Medical

From the COARM Chair

A little bit of this and a little bit of that

End of year reports in the academic world happen in June. As a retiree, for me, the end of the year is Dec. 31. Isn't it strange that we can't break loose from our previous academic calendars and lives? So be it!

Here then is a short year-end report: This last year has been a wonderful one for an increase in UUP retiree activity. The latest membership total hovers around 5,500 members, the majority of whom are located in New York state; the others can be found in communities around the country.

A large number of you have actively participated in the advocacy of our union in legislators' home offices. It has been noticeable and effective to judge by the reinstatement of important medical insurance benefits for UUP retirees. It has been reported that UUP retirees who advocate for the restoration of monies for SUNY—including TAP for student—are very effective because they represent the basic philosophy of *public higher education*, rather than the perceived bread-and-butter issues of our active colleagues.

It will be more important than ever in the upcoming November elections. While this is not a national election, remember that all politics are local in nature. Meeting with your local representatives where they live is easy and effective. Keep it up!

Big thanks are given to all those who contributed articles to this *Active Retiree*. An award of General Excellence by impartial professional judges was given to a couple of this past year's issues. Please think of short pieces that would be appropriate to all our readers. Consider this a broad solicitation for items of interest and concern.

We all belong to the national, and state, Alliance for Retired Americans, which represents retirees from a broad spectrum of unions. The weekly bulletin,

which I forward to you electronically, has highlighted the constant attack by Congress on our earned benefits, i.e., attempting to cut Social Security by \$25 billion, Medicare by \$845 billion, and Medicaid by \$1.5 trillion over the next five to 10 years. You all will be getting more information on these figures as the new year progresses. And certainly, you will be asked to advocate for your earned benefits, just as you did for the state's contribution to your comfort and well-being in retirement.

Belonging to a union, especially one as dedicated as UUP to your professional history and well-being during your active lives has enabled many of you to retire with dignity, comfort and security. The fight continues!

Personally, as your COARM chair, I have made it to chapter meetings in Plattsburgh, Buffalo, Binghamton and many other chapters in between to bring you up-to-date information. Often, UUP Retiree Member Services Coordinator Walter Apple has also been available at these local visits. Now that there are chapter Officers for Retirees (active and retiree members are eligible), we hope to see more involvement in sharing information between the two categories of members. Pre-retirement meetings have been wildly successful; more campus joint participation in activities has started. The OFR can act as a bridge of information and involvement between the two groups, active and retiree.

Just finished reading an article, "Younger Longer," by Adam Gopnik in *The New Yorker*, May 20, 2019. He writes that "there is something essential to human groups ... in keeping the old folks around even when they can't make more young folks. Old folks are repositories of extended cultural memory: it would seem advantageous to keep senior citizens around who know what to do, so to speak ..."

Indeed, the article continues with a



statement from the AgeLab of M.I.T. that "every eight seconds, a baby boomer turns 73." There is a place for us to continue making major contributions to society. It is for this reason, that UUP, each year, honors a retiree who has not only done UUP work, but considers major service and efforts in making the community better. Please recognize such members of your chapter and notify your retiree officer or me of such persons.

Early in the new year, a COARM designated finance committee will engage in negotiations with Unum, the insurance company who provides your travel support provisions. For the moment, that service is free to members, but it comes with a cost to our overall insurance costs. It would be helpful to us to know what you get from that benefit: peace of mind while traveling, actual experiences that you can share, or the value of the insurance death benefit? As we move forward in the process, the personal stories will help.

Here is wishing you all a safe and happy summer ... in anticipation of your August renewal letter for continuation in ARM: the Active Retired Membership of UUP.

In solidarity,

A handwritten signature in cursive ink, appearing to read "Joann L. Johnson".

COARM and retiree news from the chapters, regions

Binghamton

by Bob Pompi

Binghamton Chapter Officer for Retirees

On June 3, 34 UUP retirees and guests met at the Event Center at Binghamton University. COARM Chair Jo Schaffer, Southern Tier COARM regional rep Loraine Tyler and UUP Retiree Member Services Coordinator Walter Apple attended the meeting.

Schaffer and Tyler spoke to the Binghamton retirees and encouraged them to contact their representatives in the New York State Assembly and Senate to advocate for important UUP issues. Two of these issues are restoration of full state TAP payments, and the actual disbursement by NYS of the \$6 million in federal Medicaid payments to state-operated hospitals. The state has refused to release these funds, which are crucial to the solvency of the SUNY-operated teaching hospitals.

Further discussion involved emeritus status for professionals and the lack of any effort by SUNY in advocating for public higher education.

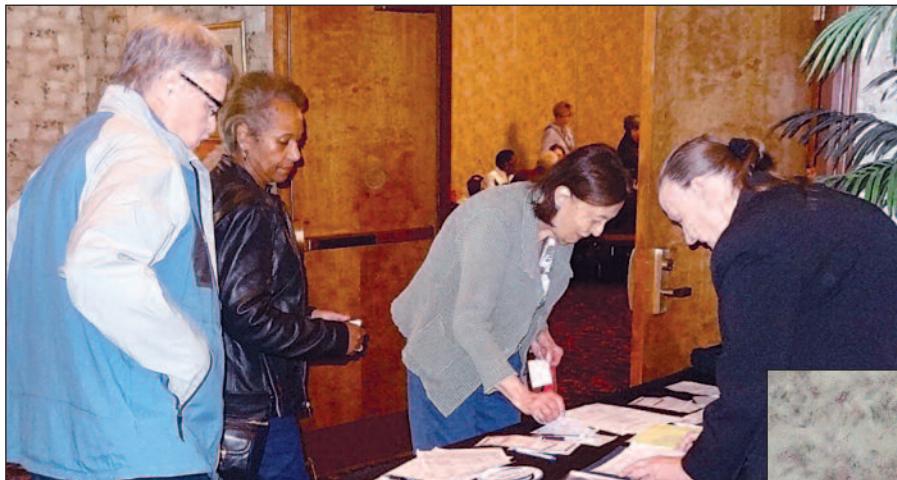
After lunch, Steven Tammaro, an associate professor of biological sciences at Binghamton University, gave a presentation on "Modern Equine Breeding and Performance." He talked about a DNA analysis technique he developed that can predict—with a fair degree of accuracy—which foals will be good at a distance and which have little chance of success. All he needs is a horse hair and his DNA mobile analysis unit.

Tammaro brought in a hoof of Seabiscuit, a horse of great fame in the late 1930s and early 1940s, and talked about his analysis of that DNA sample.

Thanks to Corinna Kruman, HR Retiree Concerns, for organizing a wonderful program.

Western New York

Photos by Larry Scott



Left, retiree members from Western NY sign in to a recent luncheon meeting.

Below, guest speaker Nuala Drescher, a former UUP statewide president and professor emeritus of history at Buffalo State, spoke about a book on UUP that she co-wrote with former UUP president Bill Scheuerman and UAlbany retired historian and UUPer Ivan Steen.



Left, COARM WNY Regional Rep Stacey Johnson addresses the nearly 75 retirees in attendance.

Triangle factory fire, the ILGWU and Fiorello La Guardia

by Daniel Scott Marrone
Farmingdale Chapter Officer for Retirees

Founded in 1900, the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union was the first large-scale coalition to represent women in the nation's workforce. Overcoming government red-tape restrictions and ruthless management intimidation, the ILGWU persevered in protecting the needletrade workers, whose ranks included many recent immigrants from Eastern Europe and Italy.

In 1909, the ILGWU called for a walkout due to abominable working conditions within New York City's over-crowded, stifling "sweatshops." Cutthroat clothing manufacturers such as Triangle Shirtwaist Co. were among firms picketed by ILGWU members. This widespread strike was called the "Uprising of 20,000." After a month of tense negotiations, the ILGWU settled with factory owners, who viewed the ILGWU with bitter acrimony. From this point forward, factory managers would continually harass the needletrade workers and their

union. At the Triangle Shirtwaist factories, emergency escape doors were padlocked to thwart ILGWU meetings and organizing activities during arduous six-day workweeks.

On March 25, 1911, fire broke out at the Triangle Shirtwaist factory at 29 Washington Place. Thread spools and rag scraps quickly became engulfed in flames. Fire extinguishers were missing. Padlocked doors prevented escape. Those that did emerge from the factory plummeted from eight-story, inadequately secure fire escape stairways. One hundred forty-six young women died in the blaze or leapt to their deaths.

In the aftermath of the tragedy, the ILGWU called for a citywide strike. Corrupt police bribed by factory owners beat women marching in picket lines. Many women on strike were arrested based on bogus prostitution charges. A 28-year-old attorney and fledgling politician



Marrone

named Fiorello H. La Guardia volunteered his services to ILGWU. Nicknamed, "The Little Flower," La Guardia skillfully represented the union in court and effectuated the release of jailed ILGWU members. Barely five-foot-two-inches tall, La Guardia was nonetheless a towering figure in support of the labor

movement across the nation. As a U.S. Congressman, he championed the Norris-La Guardia Act, which forbid management from using "Yellow Dog Contracts" to thwart union membership. He remained devoted to ILGWU throughout his dozen years as New York City mayor. The ILGWU proved eminently successful. By the 1930s, the ILGWU represented roughly 90 percent of all needletrade workers in the nation.

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



EVERETT COLLECTION

Jubilant ILGWU workers after signing a well-deserved beneficial labor contract in the late 1930s. They surround long-time ally, New York City Mayor Fiorello La Guardia.

Firemen cover up victims of the March 25, 1911, Triangle Shirtwaist factory fire.



BING.COM

COARM report from 2019 Spring DA

by Loraine Tyler
Oneonta

The following are draft minutes of the COARM meeting held during the union's 2019 Spring Delegate Assembly, May 10, in Albany.

Present: Jo Schaffer, chair

COARM: Sandra Harper, presidential appointee; Charlie McAtee, Long Island; Stacey Johnson, Western NY; Bill Borgstede, Central NY; Eric Russell, Metropolitan; Loraine Tyler, Southern Tier; and Membership Development Officer Tom Hoey, officer liaison (Not represented: Capital Region and North Country)

ARM: Barbara Maertz, Larry

Fuller, Carol Braund, Joyce Haines, John Schumacher, Michael Knee, Clifford Davis, Greg Threatte, Glenn McNitt, Gary Casarella, Molly Casarella, Lisa Yates, Judith Wishnia, Sandy Spier, Gwendolyn Veira, Gary Moore, Irene Stern, Frank Goldsmith, Daniel Marrone, Joy Bilharz, JeriAnne Jerminario, Rich Tyler, David Ritchie, Benjamin Africa, Charles Wrigley, Herb Fink, Harvey Axlerod and Ray Guydosh.

Participants were welcomed by Schaffer at 10:05 a.m.

The 2019 Winter DA minutes were approved as amended.

Chair's report—Schaffer

- Developing a more complete job description for Chapter Retiree Officers based on chapter needs. Conduit between the chapter and state.

- Makes every effort to attend COARM meetings across the state.

- VOTE-COPE—Cortland earned an Abel Blattman Award, which is given to locals/chapters that collect donations equivalent to at least \$10 per member for VOTE-COPE, NYSUT's nonpartisan political action fund. Blattman was part of NYSUT's first VOTE-COPE drive in 1974, and was the first secretary-treasurer of VOTE-COPE. He died in 1981.

- Email list should be sent to chapter assistant. It was noted that emails using



KAREN L. MATTISON PHOTOS



Above, from left, attending the COARM meeting are Sandy Harper of Downstate Medical Center, Charlie McAtee of Stony Brook, and Stacey Johnson and Gary Casarella, both of Buffalo Center.

Left, Upstate Medical University retiree Carol Braund and SUNY Poly retiree Atlas Hsie review COARM materials.

- Keep track of expenses and forecast need for dues increase. Negotiations with Unum may affect this.

- Issue: Need to establish a policy regarding mileage, e.g., can it be voucherized? Regional reps directed to use their judgment in offering mileage reimbursement.

Regional Reports

- Regional meeting requests (Sept. 1, 2019-Aug. 31, 2020). McAtee moved, Loraine Tyler seconded the motion to approve the following meetings. Adopted.

- Capital District: Spring/fall meetings will be scheduled for Albany, Cobleskill, New Paltz and System Admin.

- Long Island: Meetings will be scheduled in April and October for Stony Brook and Stony Brook HSC, and for Farmingdale and Old Westbury.

- Western NY: Regional meetings in the spring/fall for all seven campuses. Spring/fall meetings at Alfred, Buffalo Center, Buffalo HSC, Fredonia, Geneseo,

this list should be sent as BC (blind copy).

- Future Retreat Planning: A Retiree Officers Retreat for new and re-elected officers will be tied in with the Fall DA.

Finance Committee Report—Maertz

- Budget discussion
 - Fourth-quarter expenses will be more as meetings are being held.
 - Proposed fund balance \$431,000.00
 - Proposed expenses \$293,581.65
 - Unum life insurance contract ends next year. Negotiations will proceed.
 - Budget was moved and adopted as submitted.

Finance Committee members: Maertz, McAtee, Rich Tyler, Ed Drummond and Schaffer (ex-officio). Insurance Negotiations Committee: Guydosh, Rich Tyler, Maertz, McAtee and Schaffer

- Budget driven programs (adjustment to dues structure)

Brockport. Fall meeting will be held for chapter Retiree Officers in the region.

- Central NY: Spring/fall meetings planned for ESF, Morrisville, Oswego, Upstate Medical and SUNY Poly.

- Metropolitan: Spring/fall meetings planned for Downstate and Maritime, and for Optometry and Purchase.

- Southern Tier: Spring/fall meetings will be held in Binghamton, Cortland and Oneonta/Delhi.

- North Country: Spring/fall in Plattsburgh, Potsdam and Canton.

- Other meetings:

- NYSUT Retirees Council, Oct. 29, for four McAteer and Retiree Officers from Long Island chapters (\$125 plus mileage)

- Alliance for Retired Americans

- NYSUT Retiree Council

New Business

- COARM regional rep vacancies in the Capital Region and North Country. According to the union's Constitution and Governance Committee, vacancies are filled by the retiree who received the next highest votes in the election:

- Capital Region: Susan Puritz

- North Country: John Nixon

- SUNY Poly: COARM will check with committee

- Proposed Operating Procedures/Bylaws were discussed during the informal session.

- Webpage Report: Still working on project after 18 months. Hoey will check on progress.

- Pearl Brod Outstanding Retiree Award nomination: After discussion, it was decided to recommend McAteer as the 2019 recipient; the statewide Executive Board has final approval.

- Need to get more nominees from chapters.

- Officer for Retirees Job description codified: Input needed from experienced and new officers for retirees. Schaffer will be in contact.

- Outreach Programs:

- Make connections and advocate, whenever possible, with: the statewide Senior Action Council; Officers for Retirees; NYSUT Retiree Councils; and local

local labor and retiree organizations.

- Geographic redistribution of regions:

- Need to make regions more active and productive.

- Ad hoc committee to suggest restructure of regions.

COARM should consider dividing the regions as follows:

- Western NY into North Western NY (Buffalo Center, Buffalo HSC, Buffalo State and Brockport) and South Western NY (Alfred, Fredonia and Geneseo);

- Capital Region (add Plattsburgh to Albany, Cobleskill, System Admin. and New Paltz);

- Southern Tier (add Morrisville to Binghamton, Cortland, Delhi and Oneonta);

- Central NY (add Potsdam and Canton to ESF, Oswego, SUNY Poly and Upstate Medical);

- Long Island would remain the same (Farmingdale, Old Westbury, Stony Brook HSC and Stony Brook); and

- Metropolitan would remain the same (Downstate Medical, Maritime, Optometry and Purchase).

Meeting adjourned at 12:45 p.m.



Retiree members Bill Borgstede of ESF, above, and Deb Zinser of Plattsburgh, below, give their committee chair reports during the recent Spring Delegate Assembly in Albany. Borgstede co-chairs the statewide Veterans Affairs Committee; Zinser co-chairs the statewide Scholarship Committee. Both serve as UUP delegates.



Stony Brook retiree Judy Wishnia, at podium, introduces honoree Martha Livingston of Old Westbury, this year's recipient of the Judith Wishnia Advocacy Award. Also shown, right, is UUP Outreach Committee Co-chair Pamela Malone.



How about a peace race instead of an arms race?

by Lawrence Wittner

Albany

In late April, the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute reported that, in 2018, world military expenditures rose to a staggering \$1.82 trillion. The biggest military spender by far was the United States, which increased its military budget to \$649 billion (36 percent of the global total).

But most other nations also joined the race for bigger and better ways to destroy one another through war.

This situation represents a double tragedy. First, in a world bristling with weapons of vast destructive power, it threatens the annihilation of the human race. Second, as enormous resources are poured into war and preparations for it, a host of other problems—from environmental catastrophe to inadequate access to education and health care—fail to be adequately addressed.

But these circumstances can be changed, as shown by past challenges to runaway militarism.

In 1961, the spiraling nuclear arms race, global poverty, and underfunded public services led Seymour Melman, professor of industrial engineering at Columbia University, to write *The Peace Race*, a mass market paperback. The book argued that military spending should be replaced by a combination of economic aid abroad and increased public spending at home.

Melman's popular book quickly came to the attention of the new U.S. President, John F. Kennedy. On Sept. 25, 1961,

Kennedy used the occasion of his address to the United Nations to challenge the Russians “not to an arms race, but to a peace race.” Warning that “mankind must put an end to war—or war will put an end to mankind,” he invited nations to “join in dismantling the national capacity to wage war.”

Kennedy’s “peace race” speech praised obliquely, but powerfully, what was the

most ambitious plan for disarmament of the Cold War era: the McCloy-Zorin Accords. This historic US-USSR agreement, presented to the UN only five days before, outlined a detailed plan for “general and complete dis-

armament.” The disarmament process would “be accompanied by measures to strengthen institutions for maintaining peace and the settlement of international



Wittner

“Isn’t it time to revive the demand for disarmament? ...

It’s not at all difficult to draw up a reasonable, acceptable plan ... All that’s lacking is the will to act.”

— Albany Chapter retiree Lawrence Wittner

disputes by peaceful means.” In December 1961, the McCloy-Zorin Accords were adopted unanimously by the UN General Assembly.

Disarmament remained a very live issue. The National Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy, America’s largest peace organization, lauded Kennedy’s “peace race” speech, while the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency drafted an official U.S. government proposal, Blue-

print for the Peace Race, which Kennedy submitted to the United Nations on April 18, 1962. The proposal called for general and complete disarmament and proposed moving in verifiable steps toward that goal.

Nothing this sweeping followed, at least in part because much of the subsequent public attention and government energy went into halting the nuclear arms race. A central concern along these lines was nuclear weapons testing, an issue dealt with in 1963 by the Partial Test Ban Treaty, signed by the U.S., Soviet, and British governments. Progress continued with subsequent great power agreements, particularly the signing of the nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty of 1968.

Then, with important curbs on the nuclear arms race in place, much of the public and most government leaders turned to other issues.

Today, of course, we face not only an increasingly militarized world, but even

a resumption of the nuclear arms race, as nuclear powers brazenly scrap nuclear arms control and disarmament treaties and threaten one another, as well as non-nuclear nations, with nuclear war.

Isn’t it time to revive the demand for disarmament? As the past agreements of the U.S. and Soviet governments show us, it’s not at all difficult to draw up a reasonable, acceptable plan providing for verification and enforcement.

All that’s lacking is the will to act.

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

What gives me the right to speak

by Rosemarie Pagano Bundy
Upstate Medical University

Recently, a friend sent me a column written by one of my favorite “deadline artists”—or news reporters as they are commonly known—Michael Tomasky, who writes for *The Daily Beast* and has been at it for more than 35 years per his calculations.

It was the most startling exposé of an interview on the so-called Fox News of Corey Lewandowski describing how the ‘rump’ campaign would be run and how they are planning to slice and dice the other candidates running. ‘Rump’ is apparently using his penchant for lying to create stories and undermine the veracity of all the incidents that have come out in the Mueller probe and in the foreign and American media.

As I was reading his blatant lies and conjured stories, I was getting sicker and sicker and madder and madder. This chaotic, malignant, narcissistic bully of a man-child, POTUS, is using age-old tactics to turn the investigations of himself and his administration into propaganda. You could almost smell the stench rising off the page. Apparently, Corey was having great fun describing this theft of our democracy with a consolidation of the theft of the ballot box power and the norms of our presently shaky democracy. It was the reek of this lust for power that brings the immortal sin of naked pride to the forefront (with all its obvious obscenities). Could barely read it all; it was em-

barrassing and hurtful at the same time.

But I must do what I can do to thwart this push. Since words are my weapons for these last 10 years, I feel that I have enough in my head to say those things concerning POTUS and his henchmen. I checked my book list, which is now 147 items long; some read 100 percent, others sampled for the major themes (and conclusions and some dismissed as being less than informative ... just words). But my conviction only grew stronger when I perused the list. I read the books that are primarily based on uncovering the mechanisms of propaganda that would be the most applicable and the most helpful. So, here are those I believe are worth reading (all are in the OCPL library system):

- *How Democracy Ends* by David Runciman (English, philosophy but explanatory);
- *To End a Presidency* by Lawrence Tribe and Joshua Metz (Harvard Law, impeachment, history);
- *How Fascism Works* by Jason Stanley (son of Holocaust survivor, Yale Law, descriptive, painful);
- *Requiem for American Democracy* by Noam Chomsky (oldie, but classic song he's been singing);
- *Everything Trump Touches Dies* by Rick Wilson (Republican strategist, never a Trump member, angry);
- *Democracy in Chains* by Nancy



Bundy

Maclean (history, Duke, details how we got here, comprehensive);

- *On Tyranny* by Timothy Snyder (history, Yale, chilling, Nazi comparisons); and
- *How Democracies Die* by S. Levitsky and D. Zabellatt (political science, Harvard, comparisons to Banana Republics).

The only other book I felt fit with these, though not primarily about propaganda, was Zephyr Teachout's *Corruption in America*. She really knows that subject inside and out.

These are the books that most influenced my thinking and gave me talking points on just how propaganda works. They taught me how to read the news, how to discern when a statement was false, and how to write about the failures that I missed. (All of the writing was superb, by the way.) These individuals have been writing explanatory theses and teaching so they have a clarity that is helpful. Some are a bit pedantic. But with such important matters as the loss of our democracy, we can see why that was necessary. (I felt they were worth the effort.)

An interesting note: A meme fashioned out of the title of one of the books—as a shorthand way to bring the problem to mind—was seen in some news blogs. The hashtag was #ETTD (Everything Trump Touches Dies).

(*Rosemarie Bundy retired from Upstate Medical University in 2007.*)

MEDICARE ...

(continued from page 1)

the information that an American family of four with an employer sponsored PPC plan now pays on average more than \$28,000 a year for health care. The French spend much less than we do on health care and because people get preventive care before their problems become serious, they live 2 ½ years longer than we do. We must change the health care system in the United States.

Obamacare helped millions of people, but millions more are uninsured or underinsured. We have wonderful physicians and hospitals. They should be caring for all Americans. As retirees, we know the benefits of Medicare. We need Medicare for all.

(*Judy Wishnia is a longtime Stony Brook activist and a former COARM chair. She earned the union's Nina Mitchell Award for Distinguished Service and the Pearl H. Brod Outstanding Retiree of the Year award.*)



NYSUT Member Benefits thanks our UUP members

We appreciate our hard-working members for their dedication and the sacrifices they make on a daily basis to help improve the lives of others.

And NYSUT Member Benefits is proud to offer you — the UUP bargaining unit member — an opportunity to participate in more than 40 endorsed programs & services offered by NYSUT Member Benefits.

Look to Member Benefits for crucial insurance programs such as life, long-term care or vision plans. Member Benefits also offers a variety of travel, entertainment & shopping options to help you with everything from daily purchases to those special once-in-a-lifetime excursions.

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

- Financial Services
- Hotel & Vacation Discounts
- Member Shopping Program
- Car & Truck Rental Discounts
- Competitive Savings Rates
- Retail Store Discounts
- 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**.

Book review: Singing the praises of the Erie Canal

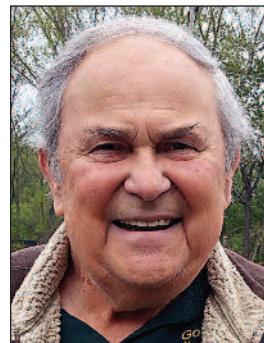
Just prior to SUNY Brockport professor emeritus Bill Hullfish's performance with the Albany Symphony, director Davide Alan Miller introduced Hullfish as a "national treasure."

The reason for this declaration comes from Hullfish's 40 years of research and performance of songs from the Erie Canal. His performances are documented in programs from hundreds of concerts ranging from appearances with symphony orchestras to individual performances at canal festivals the length and breath of the New York canal system and beyond.

During his 49-year teaching career at the College at Brockport, Hullfish and his students collected, researched, recorded and performed songs from the Erie Canal. The folk group—The Golden Eagle

String Band—that started in his 1978 class is still performing today. In fact, in June they performed for the International Great Lakes Research Association annual meeting. The Golden Eagle String Band has recorded two albums for Smithsonian/Folkways Records, toured the Oswego and Erie Canals under a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, given performances at National Park Service Historical sites, performed at the World Canal Conference, the New York State Canal Conference, Mystic Seaport Sea Music Festival, the Erie Canal Museum, and hundreds of other venues.

Using all of that experience, Hullfish has



DIANNE HICKERSON

Hullfish

written a book using the songs of the canals as "musical diaries" to tell the story of the men and women who dug the canals and plied the waterways from 1817 to 1918. Taking author John Steinbeck's belief that, "Songs are the statement of a people. You can learn more about people by listening to their songs than any other way, ..." Hullfish wrote

The Erie Canal Sings: A Musical History of New York's Grand Waterway.

Published in June 2019 by The History Press, the book is available from Amazon, Barnes and Noble, Costco, Books-a-Million, History Press, and independent bookstores.

Book reviews: Income inequality and low-cost health care

by Carl Pegels
Buffalo Center

This brief article will give the reader an overview of my writing activities. The two books are: *Towards a Fairer Social Democratic System: Less Income Inequality and Single Payer Healthcare: An Annual \$600 Billion Savings.*

In both books I mention that I am not proposing socialism, but I advocate a fairer social democratic system, a system that is now practiced by all western industrial societies plus Canada and Australia. None of these countries practices socialism, but all practice capitalism.

Socialism is now only practiced by North Korea. Even countries such as China, Vietnam and Russia, although autocratic, also practice free enterprise because it is necessary for a flourishing economy. Virtually all countries practicing social democratic policies are democracies, as opposed to autocracies. The European Economic Union, whose members all practice social democratic poli-

cies, requires that all its members be democracies.

Some of our more progressive elected representatives, such as Sen. Bernie Sanders and Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez claim they are socialists, but what they mean is that they are in socio-democratic policies. Socialism is an economic term, and is the opposite of capitalism. In the U.S., the term socialism has a bad reputation, and Democrats should avoid using it.

The first book describes how poorly the lower half of our population is treated in comparison with the upper half, and especially with the top 5 percent. In all western European countries that practice a fairer social democratic system the lower half of the population is much better off. We can do the same with a fairer taxation system and other provisions which are described in the book.

**Pegels**

The second book describes how a single payer health care system will not only yield better health outcomes, but also has the potential to save us and our economy \$600 billion annually. We are wasting that much each year and still have the poorest health outcomes in comparison with the much better-served residents in all European

countries and Canada.

The books are available in e-book format and are available from Amazon Kindle for a modest price, about that of a cup of coffee. Occasionally, I give the books away. If you send me your e-mail address, I will let you know when the give-away occurs.

(Carl Pegels, a retiree from the UUP Buffalo Center Chapter, has served as a UUP delegate for more than 20 years.)



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