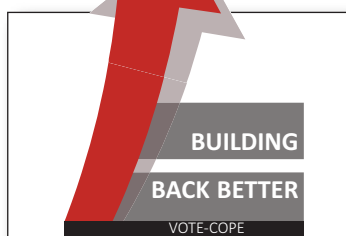




6—Minutes from the RMGC meeting



9—Retirees urged to give to VOTE-COPE



15—Easy-to-bake cookie recipe

Also inside:

- 2 — Letters to the editor
- 2 — In memoriam
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The Active Retiree

A Newsletter for Retiree Members of United University Professions

Unum forced to nix free travel assistance program

The New York State Department of Financial Services Life Bureau is requiring that Unum, UUP's life insurance carrier, no longer offer all value-added services (worldwide emergency travel assistance, life planning financial and legal resources, and employee assistance/LifeBalance – EAP), effective Jan. 1. As a result, UUP will no longer be able to offer the Worldwide Travel Assistance program to represented employees.

UUP statewide Membership Develop-



ment Officer Tom Hoey made the announcement in a Jan. 4 email to UUP leaders.

The DFS' Life Bureau has determined that Unum's insurance policies do not contain specific enough language to allow

them to offer value-added services to their customers. Unum has attempted to resolve this issue by adding to their previously approved product filings, but DFS has been unwilling to approve new policy language because the services do not have a relevant connection to life insurance.

Please share this information with your retired colleagues.

Contact the UUP Benefit Trust Fund at (800) 887-3863 with questions or for more information.

Newsletter wins two journalism awards

The *Active Retiree* has once again earned awards of excellence in the union's annual journalism contest. The newsletter picked up two awards of merit for outstanding writing, editing, photography and design.

The Summer 2019 and Fall 2019 issues earned an Award of Merit for General Excellence. The publications were edited by Jo Schaffer of Cortland.

"Great reporting on timely issues. The COARM report is a great example of how to cover a meeting. The news was presented in a very digestible format," wrote one of the Capital District-area professional journalists who served as contest judges.

"This newsletter is the professional voice in the contest. Great content. It's not just member info, it's also book reviews and stories about what people have ac-

complished," wrote another judge. "Mixing up the cover layout is classy."

Albany Chapter retiree Larry Wittner picked up an Award of Merit for Best Original Article. "How about a peace race instead of an arms race?" ran in the Summer 2019 issue.

"Good piece. Very well written and researched," the judges wrote. "He makes good points about past arms races and leaves the reader with good points to think about going forward."

Overall, the judges were pleased with the quality of entries from UUP chapters and retirees: "One of the most impressive things about this contest is how high the contestants raise the bar for themselves every year—and how the next year, they clear it and raise it a little bit more."



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

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Letters to the editor

My vaccination experience

To the editor:

Early Friday morning, Jan. 15, my wife was on the state's COVID site looking to see if any spots were open to make an appointment for a COVID vaccine for me. She noticed the Stony Brook site was listed, but not yet open. A few minutes later, it went live and we were able to get an appointment for the 4:30 p.m. the following Wednesday. There was a detailed form and questionnaire to fill out and submit. Once I did that, I immediately received an email confirmation, which I printed out to take with me as proof of my appointment.

On appointment day, I arrived 15 minutes early. I drove up to the first checkpoint and was asked if I had an appointment. I answered yes and was directed to a second checkpoint, where I was asked for my confirmation copy and photo ID.

The person there checked the documents and to see if my name was on the list of appointments. He then gave me a pen and a packet of papers and told me to proceed to the parking lot, and to fill out the form and questionnaire before going inside. The paperwork asked the same questions that as online. I finished and proceeded inside; they checked my confirmation and photo ID, and took my temperature.

I was then directed to one of about six computer stations, where they compared my online answers to those on the papers. I was then directed to another room, where I received my COVID vaccine shot. I was then sent to another room to schedule my second shot, and to wait 15 minutes before leaving.

At no time was there any line, and my total time in the building was approximately 30 minutes.

I would advise anyone getting the vaccine to wear a short-sleeve shirt or blouse. In the packet of papers you receive to take home there is a list of reported side effects. The only side effect that I have experienced so far is a sore arm at the injection site.

That was my experience; I hope all of you have a similar one.

— **Chuck Wrigley, Stony Brook Chapter officer for retirees**

'Thanks for an interesting issue'

To the editor:

I want to let you know that I enjoyed the article on John Jay by Daniel Scott Marrone. It was informative and interesting.

I also appreciated Lawrence Wittner's article on the Voting Rights Act. Thanks for an interesting issue.

— **Sara Richman, Plattsburgh Chapter**

In memoriam

Let us remember those who have passed away since Winter 2021:

Louis McAuley	.....	Binghamton
Powhatan Wooldridge	.....	Buffalo HSC
Linda Chase	.....	Downstate Medical
Beverly McKay	.....	Morrisville
Nancy Lenney	.....	Potsdam
Robert Berger	.....	Potsdam
Louis Lenzi	.....	Stony Brook
Sanford Lyman	.....	Stony Brook HSC
C. Thomas Fruehan	.....	Upstate Medical

From RMGC Chair Charlie McAteer

Welcome 2021 ... we made it!

As we start this new year with renewed hope, the COVID-19 vaccine distribution (with help from UUP and SUNY people) will slowly bring us back together for our long-awaited, in-person retiree events. We will follow the science and look this fall for the all-clear signal.

We are looking to hold future retiree virtual town halls and for participation in NYS Alliance for Retired Americans virtual town halls. Check out our UUP retiree email blasts and webpage for upcoming announcements.

The new president and U.S. Congress have started their hard work on behalf of all of us, and I want to thank those of you who participated in the election in various ways— and, most importantly, for voting!

We also await the U.S. Census results and how seats are divided up, as well our state, county, and local districts, for the next 10 years.

The news of the Unum emergency travel assistance program sudden cancellation by New York state is being discussed statewide as to any options, stay tuned (the official notice is posted in this edition).

I want to remind everyone about the Pearl H. Brod Retiree of the Year Award; nominations will be accepted through April 15. The award recognizes UUP retirees who have rendered outstanding

volunteer service to the communities and who have provided exemplary service to UUP and SUNY after retirement. Applications and details can be found at <https://uupinfo.org/awards/>

The UUP Task Force on Retirees, which submitted its report in December 2016, recently brought forth seven recommendations. The first three are noted below (from the UUP secretary/treasurer's report); the remaining four will follow in the spring edition of *The Active Retiree*. Please note that the name of the committee (COARM) was changed to the Retired Membership Governing Committee at the 2019 Fall Delegate Assembly.

The task force recommends that:

1. UUP consider a constitutional amendment to prohibit retirees from serving on the statewide Executive Board or as statewide officers (proposal to 2021 Virtual DA, Jan.22-23);
2. The COARM chair, a.k.a. Retired Delegate, be given a vote on the statewide Executive Board. One way this could be accomplished (with the secondary gain of streamlining the COARM chair election) is by moving the COARM chair election to the DA like other Executive Board members (needs to be addressed); and
3. A method be found to bring the number of retirees elected as delegates in line with the actual percentage of retirees in the union. The task force was unable to agree on a method to achieve this goal.



The group discussed three options, but it is likely there are many more. This is a significant change in the relationship of active retirees to the union, so further discussion—with input from active members—should be planned. This may require the creation of another task force. This task force should be comprised of retired and active members, as any recommendation must be voted on by the Delegate Assembly (needs to be addressed).

Continue to stay safe and wear your UUP face mask. Check out how to order one on page 11!



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!

Retiree news and views

The following are the written reports of the elected chapter officers for retirees.

Buffalo HSC

The Buffalo HSC Chapter retiree officer regularly attends the monthly executive committee meetings of the chapter, which have been done via zoom for most of this year. Chapter officers also meet a couple of days prior to the executive committee meeting to finalize the agenda for that month, again mostly by zoom this last year. The zoom sessions have been quite effective and eliminated hours of commuting time for everyone.

The duties of the retiree officer start when the UUP member retires. There have been many more inquiries about retirement since the pandemic hit. How to handle them has been discussed by the full executive committee. The pre-retirement info necessary is sent to our members by the membership officer with the aid of the UUP professional organizer. Also, specific notices such as info on advocacy events is sent to the retiree members along with the active members. Pre-retiree members were urged to attend one of the many excellent sessions held by Walter Apple, that have answered most questions.

As the retiree officer, with Walter's help, I handle direct enquires. There have not been any questions from someone who has gone to Walter's sessions. Walter also spoke specifically to our chapter members before the pandemic this last year with about 15 attendees.

Our retirees keep up with relevant information using the excellent newsletter and emails provided by Walter and RMGC Chair Charlie McAteer. There does not seem to be interest in scheduling specific retiree events in this chapter.

— Gail Willsky

Buffalo State

My report is very brief. I had planned to do something in the spring, but the pandemic hit. I have, on the other hand, developed a Facebook page. I need to be more intentional about the messages I put out there, but sadly this is it for Buffalo State.

— Otilie M. Woodruff

Delhi

The Delhi Chapter Executive Board and membership held numerous informational meetings throughout the year remotely as required because of COVID-19. There were not any concerns regarding retirement issues that were addressed. Our campus HR office is very good about being sure the prospective retiree(s) are given the UUP Retirement Packet. I usually am informed of who may be retiring. Often the retiree contacts me regards questions they have so I know who is thinking about retiring. Many times, I contact Walter Apple to get info from him regards their questions. I always strongly suggested that they continue as a UUP retiree member because of the very reasonable cost of \$50/year and all they must do is fill out the membership card in the packet, mail it in and they will be billed. I explain the many advantages to maintaining their membership. I also tell the retiree to be sure, that if they are an "Optional Retirement" retiree, that the HR office sends in the beneficiary form for the NYS death benefit. Usually if they are a NYS/NYS Teachers retiree then it is taken care of. I have also communicated with numerous future retirees to give them info such as retirement seminars through UUP. We did not have our usually shared luncheons with SUNY Oneonta retirees as usual due to the current situation.

— Joseph Greenfield

Organizing Your Vital Records booklet available online, by mail

Having your personal information in one place makes it easier to deal with the unexpected.

The Retired Membership Governing Committee (formerly COARM) created a checklist designed to be an organizing tool that will help you and your family more easily navigate moments of change. It will 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 RMGC Chair Charlie McAteer.

The document can be found on the website at <http://uupinfo.org/reports/reportpdf/OYVR2016fillable.pdf> or by contacting Walter Apple, retiree member services coordinator, at wapple@uupbenefits.org or at (800) 342-4206.



Farmingdale

UUP Farmingdale held 10 monthly executive board meetings in 2020. Since April, the meetings have been held online using “Google Meet.”

For the past four years, UUP Farmingdale chapter has had as members of its Executive Board two “retiree-related positions.” Dan Marrone has held the “retiree concerns” position since 2017. He also holds the position of officer for retirees since 2019. The first position, “retiree concerns,” became essential during the COVID-19 pandemic. Since the pandemic, there has been a significant increase in inquiries from individuals seeking information about retirement. Correspondingly, campus retirements have also increased. In fact, several long-standing members of UUP Farmingdale’s executive board have retired. The position should be renamed “pre-retiree concerns” based on the sizable number of inquiries concerning pre-retirement.

Regarding the officer for retirees role, a brief monthly report is given at each Executive Board meeting. Marrone attended COARM/RMGC meetings at the 2020 Fall Delegate Assembly held in New Rochelle in October 2019, as well as the special virtual DA held online in October 2020.

Walter Apple’s superb pre-retirement online PowerPoint presentations were offered twice at UUP Farmingdale in 2020. The June 30 and Oct. 23 presentations were offered online. Thirty-seven and 33 attendees participated in the presentations, respectively.

UUP Farmingdale typically publishes the *Unifier* newsletter six times per year, in online and hard copy formats. Beginning in March 2020, only the online version has been published. While the bulk of the newsletter articles have addressed SUNY and campus issues focusing on COVID-19, announcements concerning pre-retirees and retirees have been included, when needed.

In-person campus meetings have been suspended since April 2020. Thus, the May 2020 UUP Farmingdale retirees luncheon was canceled. With COVID-19 vaccines beginning to be distributed, it is hoped that the chapter may safely resume its retirees luncheon programs, beginning in May 2021.

— Daniel Scott Marrone

Fredonia

The current pandemic rendered all plans for retiree events in the 2019-2020 academic year moot. All chapter executive board meetings and labor-management meetings were held online and I participated in all but one of them. Although the officer for retirees has rarely participated in labor-management meetings in the past, it seemed that—with a new chapter president and a precarious financial situation—the attendance of more board members would be a sign of solidarity and, indeed, others who

had not previously participated joined the meetings.

Business cards had been distributed to members at the pre-retirement workshops, so I was able to help a number of retirees who contacted me with questions or problems. I was also able to obtain the names of employees who had retired since the onset of the pandemic, so that they could be contacted.

— Joy Bilharz

Geneseo

I’m afraid we have been minimally active this year. We had a pre-retirement meeting in fall 2019, but none since. We had a virtual meeting scheduled with Walter Apple in October 2020, but it was canceled due to unforeseen events; we have not been able to schedule another.

I have sent follow-up emails to retirees about various political action events and phone banks. A few of us were very active in phone banking (for candidates) in other states in September and October 2020.

— James Bearden

New Paltz

The New Paltz campus has had no meetings since the pandemic began. The campus is virtually operating, but only a small portion of the faculty and staff have operated—mostly, but not all, through Zoom-like platforms.

Although there is significant interest in retirement among the staff, there has not been noticeable increases yet in retirements by teaching or administrative staff.

For the most part, incidents among faculty and staff of positive COVID-19 infections is quite low, with only one faculty member and three professional staff testing positive. Events planned among the retirees for last spring and fall have been cancelled. A late-spring 2021 get-together is being considered.

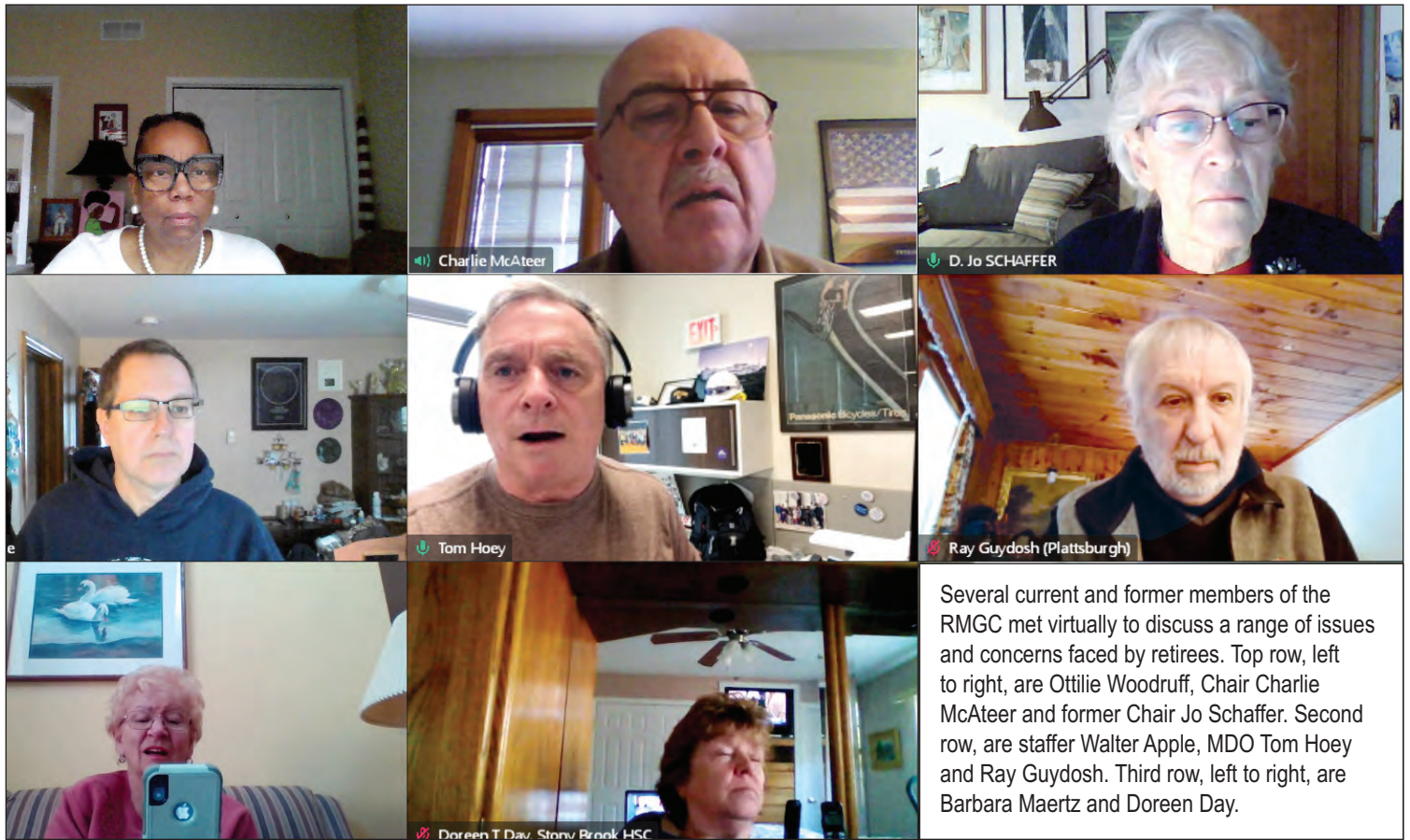
— Glenn McNitt

Plattsburgh

The SARS-CoV-2 virus has most assuredly brought change for chapter officers for retirees. The Plattsburgh UUP executive board has been meeting virtually, and I have been able to attend every virtual monthly board meeting to potentially offer retiree perspectives.

Unfortunately, planned retiree luncheons in Plattsburgh for the spring and fall had to be cancelled. However, with Walter Apple’s help in getting data, I was able to develop a Google Groups-based email list for Plattsburgh UUP retired members. That list has now been in operation for about 18 months and allows me to send to our UUP retirees monthly email updates on UUP, civil service, health insurance, Social Security and other matters, including interesting trivia-like questions that

see **Reports**, page 13



SCREEN CAPTURE BY OTTILIE WOODRUFF

Retiree leaders discuss myriad issues

by Loraine Tyler
Oneonta

The Retiree Membership Governing Committee met virtually Sept. 24, 2020. The minutes of the meeting were approved at the committee's subsequent virtual meeting, Jan. 20.

The following are the approved minutes of the September meeting:

Present: Charles McAteer, RMGC chair; Stacey Johnson, Western NY Region rep; Ray Guydosh, North Country rep; Eric Russell, Metropolitan rep; Loraine Tyler, Southern Tier rep; Irene Stern, Long Island rep; Paul Griffen, Finger Lakes rep; Tom Hoey, officer liaison and statewide membership development officer; and Ottilie Woodruff and Doreen Day, presidential appointees.

Also, Richard Tyler, Financial Committee; Walter Apple, UUP retiree member services coordinator; and guests Jo Schaffer of Cortland and Judy Wishnia

of Stony Brook.

— Chair McAteer called the meeting to order at 10:10 a.m. Minutes of April 28 meeting were approved as submitted. McAteer moved and Russell seconded the motion that L. Tyler continue as secretary of RMGC. Passed.

Chair Report

— Weekly communications, including the Association for Retired Americans' *ARA Alert*, are sent to the district representatives and retirees. Reports are made at Executive Board meetings.

— As of Sept. 16, 2020, UUP had 5,881 retirees; 1,353 (or 23 percent) live out of state. Of this, 567 live in battleground states.

— Letters have been sent to each out-of-state member regarding the importance of the 2020 election.

— As of Sept. 22, out-of-state members now have in-network coverage in the Empire Health Insurance.

— With the exception of Environmental Science and Forestry, all chapters have an officer for retirees. Regional representatives should hold either virtual or face-to-face meetings with their officers for retirees this fall. McAteer will assist reps to get access for virtual meetings.

— Apple has been holding virtual pre-retirement meetings on campuses and statewide as suggested by the union's statewide Membership Committee and MDO Hoey.



— Eight members attended the NYSUT Retiree Council meeting. The following will be nominated to represent UUP on the Retiree Council:

- ED 40: Western—Johnson, Woodruff and Griffen.
- ED 41: Central—L. Tyler, Guydosh and

Glenn McNitt.

• ED 42: Metro and Long Island—Russell, Stern and Day.

L. Tyler moved and Stern seconded the motion to forward these nominations to the UUP Executive Board. Passed.

McAteer also attends ED 40-42 meetings in his role as RMGC chair.



Finance Committee

— Johnson moved and Russell seconded the motion that Barbara Maertz continue as Finance Committee chair. Passed.

— To reduce expenses, retirees could opt out of printed copies of *The Active Retiree* and receive the issues by email.

— Finance Committee report was given by R. Tyler for Barbara Maertz:

2020 Balance	\$ 497,017
Revenues	\$ 40,000
Expenses	\$258,000
Balance	\$560,000

Finances are much different than proposed due to COVID and reduced activities.

— A sub-committee is needed to negotiate with Unum (see related story, page 1).

— A brief discussion recognized that dues have remained the same in recent years.

— The Finance Committee report was approved, with motions made by Johnson and Stern.

Regional Reports

— Reports were made by representatives McNitt (Capital), Stern (Long Island), Guydosh (Northern), Johnson (Western), Russell (Metro), Griffen (Finger Lakes) and L. Tyler (Southern Tier).

• Because of COVID, in-person meetings have not been held since March. Russell moved and Stern seconded the motion that virtual or face-to-face meetings will be approved for fall with chapter officers for retirees and spring for all retirees.

• A retreat for RMGC members and newly elected officers for retirees will be held this summer, either virtual or in connection with a Delegate Assembly. Motion carried.

New Business

— An application (will be made) for an AFT 2020-2021 Retiree Organizing Grant to train and activate retirees and to complete the job description for officers for retirees.

— Officers for retirees should get lists of current retirees from campus Human Resources and send appropriate UUP retiree information.



— An article on how retirees can contribute to VOTE-COPE will appear in *The Active Retiree* (see related story, page 7).

— Communications with regional retirees will likely be virtual. Reps can send monthly newsletters, email messages. Apple can send out to regional retirees. Send copy to McAteer. Need to have easier access to the web page.

— Bylaws are out of date. McAteer will send document to RMGC and seek a sub-committee to create a new draft.

— The next virtual meeting will be 10 a.m.-noon, Jan. 20.

Meeting adjourned at noon.

Watch for your ballot

UUP chapter elections will be underway soon, and that includes the election of chapter officers for retirees. Below are election dates to mark on your calendars, and a list of responsibilities of the officers for retirees.

Retired Membership Governing Committee Chair Charlie McAteer and UUP statewide Secretary/Treasurer Jeri O'Bryan-Losee are working on additional duties to include in chapter bylaws.

Chapter Elections 2021

Chapter & Affiliate Nominations Close	02/17/21
Chapter Nomination Lists Posted to Web.....	02/19/21
Mail Chapter Elections Ballots.....	03/10/21 - 03/12/21
Chapter Elections Ballots Due.....	04/14/21
Count Chapter Elections Ballots	04/15/21 - 04/16/21

Some Chapter Officer for Retirees Duties:

- work with leadership to obtain the names of new retirees;
- help facilitate in-district and statewide advocacy;
- attend chapter executive board meetings and report on activities relevant to engagement of the chapter's retired members;
- serve as a conduit for information to/from membership, leadership and their Retired Membership Governing Committee (RMGC) representative;
- work with the chapter president and executive board to schedule pre-retirement workshops, and other events to involve retired members; and
- coordinate with leadership to promote the benefits of being involved with active and retiree activities in the chapter and region.



UUP recommends 'revenue raisers' to help state, SUNY

The coronavirus pandemic has damaged New York state's ability to provide fair funding to the State University of New York. As such, it is more important than ever for state officials to pursue other revenue raisers to fund public education in New York, including SUNY.

There are options available that could raise as much as \$23 billion annually, without causing a detrimental impact to the state's economy. UUP supports four such alternatives: enacting new taxes on ultra-millionaires and billionaires, a pied-a-terre tax, and reducing or eliminating the stock transfer tax rebate.

Most New Yorkers support new taxes on ultra-millionaires and billionaires, and are for imposing a new tax on luxury, multimillion-dollar second homes. A February poll, even before the worst of the pandemic hit our economy, done by the Washington, D.C.-based Hart Research Associates found that 92 percent of respondents favored a tax increase for billionaires and ultra-millionaires, and a pied-a-terre tax on opulent second homes and apartments in New York City with an assessed value of more than \$5 million.

Go to
<https://uupinfo.org/legislation/revenue.php>
**for more information
on how you can help.**

Billionaires' Tax: \$5.5 billion in new state revenue annually

- A wealth tax on billionaires would create a yearly assessment on the speculative wealth of billionaires, which includes unrealized capital gains.
- This tax is projected to generate \$5.5 billion or more per year.

Ultra-millionaires' Tax: Two proposals

SHARE Act: Would generate more than \$2.5 billion in new revenue yearly

- The Shared Help Assessment to Rebuild Education Act (SHARE Act) proposed by Sen. Shelley Mayer (S.8329) and Assemblymember Deborah Glick (A.10450), would create a higher income-tax bracket for New Yorkers who earn more than \$5 million in fiscal years 2020 and 2021.
- The new revenue would go directly to public education and public higher education, with 85 percent to P-12 and 15 percent to SUNY and CUNY.
- A flat tax rate of 10.90 percent would be created for New Yorkers who fall in that new tax bracket. It would generate more than \$2.5 billion.
- The income bracket would expire after two years

Senate Bill S.8164 (A.10364): Would create more than \$2.7 billion in new revenue annually

- Legislation proposed by Sen. Rachel May (S.8164) and Aravella Simotas (A.10364) would create a new tax rate of 10.32 percent for New Yorkers who make more than \$100 million annually.
- It would also create new income-tax brackets for incomes above \$5 million and \$10 million per year.
- The proposed top bracket would be below the tax rates in New Jersey and California and affect about 4 percent of New Yorkers.
- Since the state passed a millionaire's tax in 2016, the number of millionaires in New York grew by 72 percent and their wealth increased by 54 percent.

Pied-à-Terre Tax: About \$650 million in new state revenue annually

- This tax, as proposed by Sen. Brad Hoylman (S.44) and Assemblymember Deborah Glick (A.4540), would be an assessment on luxury, non-primary residences in New York City, with an assessed value of more than \$5 million.
- It is estimated that a mere 2 percent of the city's housing stock would qualify for the pied-à-terre tax.

Reinstate the Stock Transfer Tax: Up to \$14 billion in new state revenue annually

- Enacted in 1905, this tax still exists in state law at ¼ of 1 percent on transfers on stocks and bonds in the financial markets. In the 1980s, the state began rebating the collected revenue to stockbrokers.
- Reducing or eliminating this tax rebate would also cut down on financial "churning," where money is moved around in the financial industry with no impact on economic productivity or our economy.
- Sen. James Sanders (S06203) and Assemblymember Phil Steck (A07791-A) sponsored this legislation.

UUP kicks off 'Building Back Better' drive

UUP needs everyone's help to ensure SUNY remains on solid financial footing—especially as the University faces the possibility of deep budget cuts amid a rocky economy and the escalating coronavirus pandemic.

Keep the University strong and vibrant, now and into the future, can only be accomplished through hard work—and money.

The union in December kicked off its 2020-2021 VOTE-COPE campaign to raise voluntary contributions to NYSUT's political action fund, which supports candidates of all parties based on voting records on education, labor, health care and working-family issues. NYSUT returns up to 40 percent to each local, based on the VOTE-COPE donations by its members; the rest is used by NYSUT for larger, statewide advertising campaigns, political action efforts, campaign committees and candidate endorsements.

No union dues are used to fund VOTE-COPE activities and initiatives.

"These funds are a necessary tool in the fight to protect public education—our University, our students, our patients, our jobs and our retirement benefits," said statewide Vice President for Professionals Tom Tucker, who oversees the union's political fundraising efforts. "If you haven't



donated before, now is the time. If you are already giving to VOTE-COPE, now is the time to give more."

This year's VOTE-COPE drive, "Building Back Better," is spearheaded by Sandra Lewis, UUP's statewide VOTE-COPE coordinator and a Fredonia Chapter member. The goal: to increase, up to 10 percent, the number of people contributing at each chapter, en route to what she hopes will be a record-setting year in overall donations. The drive runs through May 2021.

Lewis said UUP is behind the October 2019 total of nearly \$200,000. She is tapping VOTE-COPE regional organizers to

assist in raising members' awareness of the importance and benefits of VOTE-COPE. She is developing a flier for chapter-based VOTE-COPE coordinators to distribute, and was working on a social media toolkit to help in their efforts.

She is counting on UUP retirees to do their part.

"I am asking all of our members—active and retired—to be stronger advocates by giving to UUP's 'Building Back Better' VOTE-COPE campaign," Lewis said. "We need to get everyone on board. It doesn't matter if a person can only give a dollar a paycheck. We still have work to be done."

How to donate

There are several ways for retiree members to donate to VOTE-COPE: through Teachers' Retirement System or Employees' Retirement System pension withdrawals; checking the appropriate box on a UUP reimbursement voucher, when applicable; by check or money order; or selecting VOTE-COPE when buying UUP face masks or filters (see story, page 11).

Retirees receiving ERS and TRS pension payments can authorize monthly withdrawals. Forms can be requested through the NYSUT website at <https://bit.ly/3g9Mzdm>.

Retiree members can also go to <https://bit.ly/2KiXEh4> and fill out a UUP form to donate by check or money order.

UUP RETIREES VOTE-COPE PLEDGE CARD

Name (please print) _____ Date _____

Address _____ Cell Phone _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

UUP Active Retiree Region _____ UUP Chapter _____

I pledge \$ _____ to VOTE-COPE Non-SUNY Email _____

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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 _____
Please see attached.

B. Service to UUP: _____ From-To _____
Please see attached.

C. Service to SUNY: _____ From-To _____
Please see attached.

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

DEADLINE: April 15

Remembering Pearl Brod: devoted activist for retirees

by Daniel Scott Marrone
Farmingdale

According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, an advocate is defined as “one who pleads the cause of another; one who supports or promotes the interests of a cause or group.” Pearl H. Brod was an individual who fulfilled these ideals in her lengthy, distinguished career.

UUP has among its honors the Pearl H. Brod Outstanding Retiree Award (see this year’s nomination form on page 10). This award is a fitting tribute to a staunch advocate for the disabled and for SUNY retirees. Among Pearl’s many achievements in her profession was being the first female academic administrator at Farmingdale State College. Though she retired from SUNY in 1985, Pearl remained extremely active in subsequent decades regarding the needs of our fellow UUP members, most especially those with disabilities and retirees.

I witnessed her “in action” beginning in the late-1980s at UUP Farmingdale general membership meetings. In the short socializing time before the meetings began, crowds would gather around her, demonstrating that she was clearly a center of attention. When the meetings commenced, Pearl would advocate (complain) about campus work and safety conditions. She would “plead the cause” for disabled students, faculty and staff. Most especially, she advocated for the needs and rights of SUNY retirees.

Shortly after her passing on July 11, 2011, professor Russell Tuthill wrote a tribute to her that appeared in the September 2011 UUP Farmingdale Chapter *Unifier* newsletter. In his article, “Remembering Pearl,” Russ noted that Pearl may be credited with the establishment of the campus Institute for Learning in Retirement; parking privileges for retirees; retiree luncheons; and the free use of libraries and campus facilities throughout the SUNY system. Russ added that Pearl was an early advocate in the creation of the annual COLA (cost-of-living adjustment) in

our state-administered pension plans.

Pearl remained active in UUP affairs for most of her 26 post-retirement years. Even after Pearl moved to Florida, she organized UUP retiree meetings in the Sunshine State.

UUP Farmingdale Chapter President Vicki Janik remembered Pearl in this way: “She and her husband Nat were two of the kindest UUPers I have known. I can remember going to a Delegate Assembly 30 years ago when I knew almost no one. Pearl and Nat were sitting together on a sofa in the bar at The Desmond Hotel. When Pearl saw me standing in the doorway, she called out and asked me to sit with them. Pearl actually remembered my name! We chatted about the college, UUP, things to do in UUP, and how very dark the room was. As she did with so many other people, Pearl made me see UUP as a welcoming group that cared about all of its members. What a terrific role model she was—and remains—for all of us!”

According to the UUP website, Pearl was a long-time academic delegate who served as elected chair of the statewide Committee on Active Retired Membership from 1999-2003; she served as COARM’s Long Island Region representative from 1993-2009.



**Pearl H. Brod
(1921-2011)**



(Daniel Scott Marrone, Ph.D., is a distinguished service professor emeritus from SUNY Farmingdale. He serves as chapter officer for retirees and as a UUP delegate.)



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Is the nationalist tide receding?

by Lawrence Wittner

Albany

Nationalism—placing the interests of one's own nation above the interests of other nations—has been a powerful force in world affairs for centuries.

But it seemed on the wane after 1945, when the vast devastation of World War II—a conflict fostered by right-wing, nationalist demagogues—convinced people around the globe of the necessity to transcend nationalism and encourage international cooperation. Indeed, the widespread recognition of the interdependence of nations led to the creation of institutions like the United Nations (which established a modicum of global governance) and the European Union (which established a regional federation).

Thus, it came as a shock when, during the second decade of the 21st century, a new generation of nationalists, invariably rightwing populists, made startling political breakthroughs in their countries. Feeding on popular discontent with economic stagnation and widespread immigration, nationalist demagogues like Matteo Salvini of Italy, Viktor Orban of Hungary, and Geert Wilders of the Netherlands stirred up mass support. In Britain, Nigel Farage's new United Kingdom Independence Party spearheaded a campaign for a British exit from the European Union, leading to passage of a June 2016 Brexit referendum. In France, Marine Le Pen, leader of the neo-fascist National Front who focused on what she termed a battle between "patriots" and "globalists," came startlingly close to election as her country's president in 2017. Another flamboyant nationalist leader, Brazil's Jair Bolsonaro, campaigning under the slogan "Brazil Above Everything, God Above Everyone," was elected his nation's president with 55 percent of the vote in 2018.

Perhaps the best-known of the new crop of nationalist leaders, as well as a keen inspiration to them all, was Donald Trump, the surprise victor in the 2016 U.S. presidential election. Adopting the slogan "Make America Great Again" during his election campaign, he spelled out his nationalist views even more plainly at a December 2016 rally of his supporters. "There is no global anthem," he declared. "From now on it is going to be: America First. Okay? America First. We are going to put ourselves first." Contemptuous of the United Nations, he told it off with remarkable bluntness in September 2019. "The truth is plain to see," he informed the UN General Assembly. "Wise leaders always put the good of their own people and their own country first. ... The future does not belong to globalists. The future belongs to patriots."

This attack upon the very basis of institutions for international

cooperation and global governance was not just rhetorical. During his presidency, Trump had the U.S. government pull out of the UN Human Rights Council, abandon UNESCO, defund UN relief efforts for Palestinians, withdraw from the World Health Organization, and invoke sanctions against top officials of the International Criminal Court. He also withdrew the United States from key international nuclear arms control and climate agreements.

Recently, however, the nationalist wave appears to be receding. Although Britain's ruling Conservative Party took up the Brexit torch, it proved unable to facilitate Britain's departure from the European Union. Today, more than four years after nationalists' referendum victory, Brexit talks are stalled. In France, Le Pen's National Rally party (which replaced the National Front) was trounced in the July 2020 local elections, and polls indicated that, in the 2022 presidential election, she would lose once again to the

internationalist Emmanuel Macron. Similarly, in Brazil, President Bolsonaro made almost daily Facebook Live broadcasts this November, encouraging his supporters to back specific candidates in local elections. Subsequently, most of them went down to defeat.

From the standpoint of

the new nationalists, their most disastrous defeat occurred in the United States, where, in November 2020, President Trump lost his bid for re-election. Despite numerous nationalist antics during his campaign, such as hugging and kissing the American flag, Trump was defeated by the Democratic candidate, Joe Biden, by more than 6 million votes. Moreover, Biden was a strong supporter of multilateralism and, as the New York Times noted in a front-page article shortly after the election, "makes no secret of the speed with which he plans to bury 'America First' as a guiding principle of the nation's foreign policy." In fact, Biden was already committed to having the United States resume support of the United Nations, rejoin the World Health Organization, and re-enter nuclear arms control and climate agreements.

Furthermore, global cooperation and institutions retain widespread support among the people of the world. A Pew Research Center poll of 14,276 people across 14 nations during the summer of 2020 found that 81 percent believed that "countries around the world should act as part of a global community that works together to solve problems," while only 17 percent thought that such countries "should act as independent nations that compete with other countries and pursue their own interests." When it came to the United Nations, a 2019 Pew survey of 34,904 respondents in 32 countries found that a median of 61 percent had a favorable opinion of the world organization.

Most Americans shared these views. The summer 2020 Pew

The Trump administration
"attack upon the very basis
of institutions for international
cooperation and global governance
was not just rhetorical."



Wittner

Where will the far left take us?

by **Bernard Mudd**
Empire State College Chapter

Are we headed to a two-tier system, a kind of politically connected caste system in the United States? I surely hope not. But the policies being espoused by many of those on the left are taking us in that direction.

Let's begin with the United States Congress. First, I find it amazing that Congress even has the audacity to put "Laws that do not apply to Congress" as a title on one of their house.gov web pages (archives-democrats-rules.house.gov/Archives/jcoc2ai.htm), and secondly, that it fits tidy into the current mantra, "Do as I say, not as I do." For example, Title VI of the 1964 Act prohibiting discrimination based on race, color, or national origin does not apply to Congress. Neither does the 1975 Age Discrimination Act, the National Labor Relations Act, the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA), the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) nor the Employee Polygraph Protection Act. There are even more exemptions.

Next, I am 100 percent sure that a "Medicare for All" proposal will have a Congressional exemption if it becomes law and there will be no attempt whatsoever to defund the U.S. Capitol Police. Medicare for All will not encompass all of us. Congress will carve their exemption, unions too, just like they did for the Affordable Care Act. In short, "Medicare for All" will be more of a "Medicaid for All" proposal and the contrast will be significant from what we have today. Similarly, law enforcement and lady justice are no longer blind. Political party affiliation is now the new determining factor, not all of the ten Bill of Rights are revered equally, and media optics are more important than legal evidence. The General Michael Flynn case is a perfect example; set him up, squeeze him, and hope he turns on the President. My point is that there was a time when many on the left would have been enraged at such tactics being applied to an American citizen.

Finally, I grew up in Washington, D.C., where there is definitely a two-tier system. For example, President Barack

Obama's two children went to Sidwell Friends School, with an annual tuition of around \$29,000, and Vice President Joe Biden's granddaughters also attend Sidwell. After graduation, 100 percent of the students from Sidwell go on to attend a four-year college, most likely an elite institution. Conversely, D.C. high schools have one of the lowest graduation rates in the country, at 43 percent (per Huffington Post). Doesn't take a genius to determine who benefits the most from providing student loan forgiveness or tuition-free college.

The laundry list of examples is large and will be getting larger. And, in my opinion, we're definitely not on the right track to more economic, political and social freedom and prosperity via a two-tier system based on political sway. Secret warrants issued by a secret court will not turn out well, media and tech company bias serves no one, and suggesting that even more trillions in debt is needed will only debase our currency further. Sounds pretty third world to me and that's where the political far left has always taken a country historically.

survey found that, among U.S. respondents, 62 percent had a positive view of the United Nations, compared to 31 percent with a negative one. Indeed, a February 2020 Gallup poll discovered that 64 percent of U.S. respondents wanted the United Nations to play a leading or a major role in world affairs.

Polls also found that world public opinion toward the European Union was quite positive—even, ironically, within Britain, where support for Brexit sank below 40 percent by November 2020.

The continuing popularity of transcending nationalism should not surprise us, for it coincides with the fundamental necessities of today's world. After all, how can the coronavirus pandemic, the climate crisis, the nuclear arms race, and numerous other worldwide problems be handled effectively without strengthening global cooperation and governance?

(Lawrence Wittner is a professor of history emeritus at UAlbany and the author of Confronting the Bomb published by Stanford University Press. This article first appeared Jan. 5 on the Citizens for Global Solutions blog.)

Reports

(continued from page 5)

have further engaged members and member responses. Those emails have encouraged members' questions and feedback to me about UUP and other issues, and I have been able to assist a number of retired members in navigating ever-present bureaucracy. That communication has also encouraged continued retiree identification with UUP.

— Ray Guydosh

System Administration

The officer for retirees at the System Administration Chapter is a regular, active participant in the chapter executive board. The board is revising the chapter by-laws; making certain that the new document has proper information, etc., regarding the officer for retirees and their participation in the chapter.

A successful, well-received pre-retirement workshop was conducted. There has been extensive engagement of the retiree cohort via chapter political action/advocacy.

And here's to the hope for in-person programs, meetings and events in the not-too-distant future.

— John Schumacher

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On broken arms ... and baking cookies

by Loraine Tyler

Southern Tier Regional Rep

Hello Retirees!
I've missed communicating with you the last two months. On Oct. 25, I fell while stacking wood and broke the radius in my right arm. Of course, I'm right-handed and was in four different casts while healing. I couldn't do much, including typing, so I did a lot of reading, but not much else.

The cast was removed Dec. 18, but I'm

left with Complex Regional Pain Syndrome. The pain is most likely from nerve damage and may or may not go away. I have five pages of exercises that I'm doing at home, and I started physical therapy Jan. 11.

I've missed our retiree brunches, catching up and enjoying being together. My plan is to start the brunches as soon as we are all vaccinated. I hope this will be late spring, but it may be summer. Elections will be held this spring for the officer for retirees on each campus. It would be great if we

could have candidates at our brunches or have a virtual meeting introducing candidates.

I'm sure your holidays were as quiet as ours. When our daughter is able to travel home, we'll celebrate then, even if it's Christmas in July!

I did get some baking done after the cast came off. Rich fills in doing what I can't—open cans, empty bowls, etc. I found the recipe below, which uses only four ingredients and it makes a pretty good cookie.

May 2021 be a better year for all of us!

Chewy Cookie Recipe

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

In a large bowl, combine one box (12-14 oz) cake mix (any flavor, but the type without pudding), 2 eggs and ½ cup vegetable oil.

Beat with electric mixer for two minutes. Fold in 1 cup chocolate chips, candies, nuts, dried fruit.

Form the dough into 1-inch balls and place 2 inches apart on ungreased baking sheets.

Bake 10-12 minutes, until very lightly browned at edges.

Let cool completely and remove from baking sheets.

Makes 2 dozen.

Hint: I used a chocolate cake mix, crushed peppermint candies and nuts. The cookies are chewy and pretty! Enjoy!



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