

April  
2002  
Vol. 10 No.4

# OSARC newsletter

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Encounter



Chinese Scholar's Garden  
Photo: Dan Morgan



## OSARC

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## Warning! Gala 10<sup>th</sup> Reunion Ahead!

It's time to celebrate. You've earned it. Ten years ago, OSARC was founded by four retirees around a kitchen table. Today, nearly half of OSA's retirees belong to our club. June 12<sup>th</sup> at 1pm at the 7<sup>th</sup> Regiment Armory Mess (67<sup>th</sup> Street and Park Avenue, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor), we're gonna blow the roof off the dump, as they say. A wonderful meal, great music, a chance to hobnob with your former colleagues, and an awards ceremony are all yours for the modest cost of \$15 per OSARC member, \$40 for each guest. It promises to be a memorable occasion. But, time to reserve your seat is short. We've extended the deadline by a week to May 8<sup>th</sup>.

With this newsletter is a purple flyer. Please complete and return the coupon by May 8<sup>th</sup>, along with your check payable to OSARC, in the enclosed pre-addressed envelope. Don't forget to affix a 34 cent stamp.

## How Sweet It Isn't

What do frequent urination, excessive thirst, extreme hunger, unusual weight loss, increased fatigue, irritability and blurry vision have in common? They are all signs of diabetes, a disease in which the body's blood glucose level skyrockets.

May 8<sup>th</sup>, Marie Koplowitz of the New York City office of the American Diabetes Foundation will speak to OSARC members about the signs and symptoms of the various types of diabetes, the risk factors, ways to limit your risk, and available treatment

Next OSA/OSART Retirees Club Meeting • All Retirees Welcome!

Wednesday • May 8, 2002 • 12:30-2:30pm

Speaker: Marie Koplowitz, American Diabetes Association  
The Symptoms and Treatment of Diabetes

### OSARC Officers 2001-2002

Co-Chair..... Dan Morgan  
Co-Chair..... Gloria Djaha  
Treasurer..... Ana T. Vives  
Secretary..... (Vacant)

### We'll Be Seeing You In All The Old Familiar Places

The following OSARC members and friends attended our April outing:

*Renee Bash, Manny Friedman, Ira Greinsky and Cecille Wisotsky, Mary Hillman, Roslyn Jones, Richard Kucera and Jean Kucera, Barbara Mont and Bill White, Gloria Morales, Dan Morgan, Louis Starkey, Lillian Williams.*

We'd love to see **you** at our next meeting

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### Healthcare Is A Human Right!

The last in a series of presentations titled "Rekindling Reform" on systems of universal healthcare in other nations (and the potential for such a system in the United States) is to be held on Thursday, May 16, 2002 at 4:30pm at the Hunter College School of Social Work (79<sup>th</sup> Street and Lexington Avenue). Dr. Victor Rodwin of New York University will speak about universal healthcare in France.

Given the persistent problem of more than 40 million Americans without health insurance, "Rekindling Reform," has examined healthcare in Germany, Canada, and the United Kingdom, as well as France. The goal is to reopen debate in this country about healthcare as a basic human right.

Then, on Saturday, May 18, 2002 from 12 noon-3pm at AFSCME DC 1707, 75 Varick Street, 14<sup>th</sup> Floor, the NY Labor Party will be holding a meeting centering on their *Just Healthcare* campaign – a proposal for single payer national healthcare. The Labor Party is a national labor movement-based political party for working people. For more info, call 212-946-5501 after May 1<sup>st</sup>.

### Nominations Now Needed For Next Year

The time has come the walrus said to speak of many things, of shoes and ships and sealing wax, of cabbages and. . . OSARC board nominations.

Enclosed with this newsletter is a nomination form for officers for the 2002-2003 OSARC year. You may nominate yourself. Although we are mailing this issue of the newsletter to all retirees (because of the upcoming 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary OSARC celebration/reunion), we ask that only OSARC members make nominations. Please return your nomination form in the enclosed pre-addressed envelope. Don't forget to add a 34 cent stamp. You may also make your nominations in person at our May 8<sup>th</sup> meeting. If you are not presently an OSARC member and wish to nominate yourself or others, please return your annual \$18 OSARC dues along with the nomination form.

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### Help Put The Movement Back in the Movement

At the core of the labor movement is the simple idea of *solidarity* – that there is strength in unity. OSA is often called on to support labor struggles by other unions in New York City. For example, April 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>, Local 375 of AFSCME DC37 held two rallies in front of 2 Broadway to protest the MTA's contracting out of design work for the proposed Second Avenue subway. This move means the work will not be done by unionized City workers. We'd like to develop a group of retiree-activists willing to mobilize for these sort of actions. Want to participate? Please clip and return the coupon. Don't forget, stylish OSA hats and shirts (and a sense of purpose) will be yours when you turn out.

I want to be part of OSARC's labor activist group.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Fax No. \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: Rob Spencer, OSA, 220 East 23<sup>rd</sup>

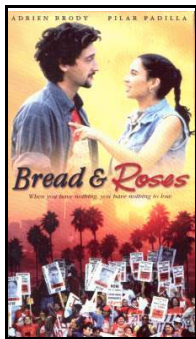
## Friday Night At The Movies

OSA will be hosting and cosponsoring, along with a number of other unions, *LaborFilms*, a semi-monthly screening series of films on labor themes, starting in May. These are dramatic and documentary films on labor history, workers' lives and the fight for economic and social justice.

Each screening will take place Friday night starting at 7pm in Room 709 at the union office, 220 East 23<sup>rd</sup> Street (between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Aves) and will be followed by an informal discussion. Light refreshments will be available. The schedule for the first three programs:

### May 17, 2002 *BREAD AND ROSES* (2001, 110 min., US )

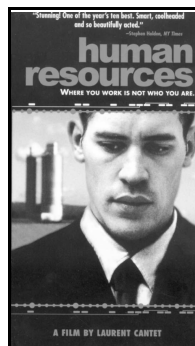
Her hours are long, her wages low and she can be fired at any time. Maya, a young Mexican immigrant works as a non-union janitor cleaning offices in Los Angeles. Enter a young union organizer who introduces a campaign to unionize the janitors. Surprised to learn that she has "rights," Maya joins the struggle for justice for janitors.



June 7, 2002 *H U M A N*

### *RESOURCES* (1999, 100 min., France)

A story of the bonds and conflicts in the relationship between a father and son who find themselves on opposite sides of a labor struggle. The father has worked 30 years on the shop floor; the son is now a manager with the same firm. When the son discovers his work will mean the layoff of workers, he must decide which side he's on.

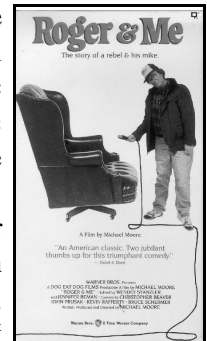


### June 21, 2002 *ROGER AND ME* (1989, 91 min., US)

The 1937 sit-down strike against General Motors in Flint, Michigan was one of the defining moments in US labor history. It ended in union recognition for the Auto Workers. Half a century later, GM closed the plants and laid off 30,000 workers. Journalist/humorist

Michael Moore returned to his hometown to produce a scathing, satirical documentary in turn hilarious, tragic and biting about the economic catastrophe and its impact on the citizens of Flint.

The series will take a hiatus for the summer and return in the fall with screenings on September 20<sup>th</sup>, October 4<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>, November 1<sup>st</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> and December 6<sup>th</sup>. Mark your calendars now, but please call the OSA Hotline (212)330-8833 or visit the newline page on the website—[www.osaunion.org](http://www.osaunion.org)—starting in early May for up-to-date information on the series and any changes in schedule



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## The COMRO Report

Jim McKeon provided the following information about the April COMRO meeting.

*The value of the City's pension system* dropped by \$9.4 billion from \$105 billion to \$95 billion as a result of the recession and stock market rout. However, since many economists believe the recession ended in January or February, it's expected that the system's assets will shortly increase. In any case, the state Constitution guarantees a pension can't be "diminished or impaired" once a retiree is receiving one.

As of June 30, 2001, there were approximately 339,000 active employees working for the City and 234,000 retirees and beneficiaries receiving about \$6.1 billion in pension benefits.

During the height of the stock market boom, the 14-16% return covered all payouts and the required 8% minimum return. In fact, the City was able to eliminate its pension contributions for a while. In what McKeon labelled "a timing problem," now that the faltering economy leaves the City less money, they must pay in.

*Universal Healthcare.* With 42-43 million Americans currently uninsured, the US is the only major industrial national without universal health coverage. That number is expected to grow by 6 million this year.

COMRO was addressed by a guest speaker on universal healthcare who mentioned a series of programs on universal healthcare in other nations,

“Rekindling Reform” (See separate article, page 2).

He expressed concern about the need to protect these target populations: the elderly, children, women, the mentally ill, people of color, people with chronic illness, and the physically disabled.

The speaker said much has been learned from the Clinton Administration’s failure on healthcare. Efforts



**Carl Grillo Glass House** at the Staten Island Botanical Garden  
(photo: Dan Morgan)

at reform should be done openly and involve everyone because opposition will be fierce from powerful forces who make lot of money on the current system. It was agreed that trade unionists must play a key role in getting universal coverage passed.

**Health Care Access Resolution.** COMRO voted to support the campaign to pass HCR99, the Health Care Access Resolution, in the House of Representatives

The Resolution, developed by the Congressional Universal Health Care Task Force, commits Congress to “enact legislation guaranteeing access to health care for all Americans by the next Presidential election in 2004, laying out 14 principles to guide its development.”

COMRO asks all City retirees to contact their member of Congress to urge them to co-sponsor HCR99 or to thank them for their co-sponsorship and to ask them to officially join the Congressional Universal Health Care Task Force.

As of March, 2002, New York Congress members co-sponsoring the legislation are: Gary Ackerman, Maurice Hinchey, Gregory Meeks, Jerrold Nadler, Major Owens, Nydia Velazquez, Anthony Weiner, Charles Rangel and Jose Serrano.

For more information on the campaign, visit the website of the Universal Healthcare Action Network <http://www.uhcan.org/HCAR> or write to the Metro New York Health Care For All Campaign, 88 Third Avenue, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Brooklyn NY 11217, Phone

(718)694-8290, email [metrohealth@igc.org](mailto:metrohealth@igc.org).

**Medicare Part B Reimbursement.** Legal counsel from the Mayor’s office, the City Council and AFSCME DC37 are meeting to work out details on implementing Mayor Bloomberg’s announcement that he is withdrawing the lawsuit initiated by former Mayor Giuliani against full reimbursement.

Bloomberg put \$33 million into this year’s budget and \$44 million in next year’s to cover the costs. However, he apparently does not want to guarantee full reimbursement in perpetuity, which the law, if it stands, guarantees. The goal is to work out something acceptable to the unions and the Mayor. Once all details are resolved, it will take approximately six weeks for the remainder owed for 2001 to be received.

**A resolution that would call for the elimination of taxes on Social Security benefits** was introduced for COMRO consideration. Taxation of benefits was a policy first pushed, said Jim McKeon, by former New York Senator Al D’Amato. The resolution was referred to COMRO member organizations for consideration, with the expectation of a vote at the May COMRO meeting.

Recently retired City Councilperson and former labor leader **Mary Pinkett is to be honored** by COMRO on June 12, the same date as OSARC’s gala 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary luncheon. While we may not be able to attend, we join in saluting Mary Pinkett for her lifelong devotion to working people.

**The Senior Action Council of the New York City Central Labor Council** is growing and looking for activists. For more information call Stuart Leibowitz or Abe Schwartz at 212-604-9552.

**The New York State Health Plan** bill (S 3354/A6779) was sent to COMRO’s health committee for a recommendation on COMRO support. The bill would provide a comprehensive system of access to health insurance for state residents, provide for its administrative structure as a public benefit corporation, establishes a NY Health Trust Fund to



**OSARCers at the Carl Grillo Glass House**  
(photo: Dan Morgan)

hold monies from a variety of sources to finance the plan and create a mechanism to collect plan premium payments (8% employer premium and 2% employee payroll premium;9% for the self-employed)

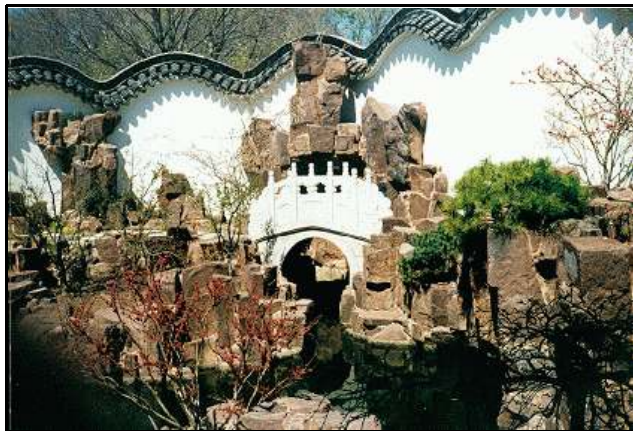
*Legislation was introduced in the state legislature that would mandate that the cost of pharmaceutical drugs in New York State be no more expensive than any other location where the same drugs could be purchased.* Bill A1705/S1104-A was sent to COMRO's health committee for recommendation on COMRO support.

You can read the bills by going to the State Assembly website <http://assembly.state.ny.us>.

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## Finding China on Staten Island

“You felt you were really away from the rest of the world. It was very serene,” said OSARC member Mary Hillman, describing the destination of OSARC's April



New York Chinese Scholar's Garden (photo: Dan Morgan)

field trip – the New York Chinese Scholar's Garden, part of the Staten Island Botanical Gardens.

OSARC member Renee Bash added, “the Garden was beautiful, peaceful, varied, surprising. It was wonderful to find something like that on Staten Island. You really had the feeling of being someplace else.”

According to OSARC Chair Dan Morgan, “The weather was wonderful as 14 of us met at the Visitors Center at noon, went inside to the snack bar and then to the Garden, which he pronounced “fabulous.” Said Morgan, “Although it has been open only since 1999, it has become one of the more famous attractions in New York City.”

According to the Garden's promotional material,

“It was the first authentic garden of its type in the United States. Designed by Mr. Gongwu Zou, China's foremost authority on classical



garden design...this one-acre walled Garden is a superbly crafted example of Ming design. It is sited on a terraced hillside overlooking a 20 acre pond and wetland and is set in a Chinese park landscape of flowering trees and bamboo.”

The highlight of the Garden, said Hillman, was the varied natural rock formations which, she said, were “truly beautiful, reflecting Chinese interest in natural rock art.”

Bash noted that while OSARC was there, “they were working on a special rock exhibit. We were fortunate because the woman who was putting the exhibit together was very enthusiastic and started talking to us. It was like having a private tour.”

“The rocks are unbelievable,” said Bash. “They are not sculpted, they're found, but they look like sculptures and they are placed in very interesting and unexpected ways.”

Hillman said that “from the outside you'd never know that the Garden is as intricate as it is” – describing a small winding stream, mosaic tiles, secluded stone tables, and a house displaying Chinese rock formations.



NY Chinese Scholar's Garden (photo: Dan Morgan)

Bash said, “You think you can stand at the threshold and see everything, but you can’t. The architecture was unique. You would go through an opening and there would be all these lovely things to see and all of a sudden there was another opening in front of you and you would enter a totally different space with a different landscape.”

The Chinese Garden is only one part of the larger Staten Island Botanical Garden, which includes a small castle with a maze, a hothouse and a lake with swans.

Morgan noted that “some of us went to the Carl Grillo Glass House (a greenhouse) and others to



Castle at Connie Gretz’s Secret Garden, Staten Island Botanical Gardens (photo: Dan Morgan)

Connie Gretz’s Secret Garden (unfortunately closed) We also stopped at the Pond Garden, where OSARCer Louis Starkey had a long conversation with a big black swan.”

Hillman said the “plants were beautiful, but please



Louis Starkey’s swan song? A friend of Mr. Starkey’s gives him the eye. (photo: Dan Morgan)

don’t ask me their names.”

Bash said a unique aspect of the Garden were specialized guides, which you could carry with you as you conducted a self-guided tour on a specific topic of interest – rocks, plants, mosaics, etc.

Bash concluded, “I plan to go back. Next time I may give myself a guided tour.”

“The essence of the whole field trip is not where you are going but who you are with,” said Hillman. “It was a light adventure with good people, good company – and that made the day.”

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Thanks!

A note of thanks to members Dan Morgan, Ana Vives, Louis Starkey and Mary Hillman for stuffing and mailing the March newsletter, and to Richard Kucera for processing OSARC dues payments.



## Happy Birthday to OSA Retirees Born in May

Dena C. Abrams, Kenneth Asbedian, Saul Bick, Adona Blake, Rita Brennan, Leane Cheek, James Corleto, Barbara Dickson Stewart, David Dorffman, Isadore Feldman, Ella Gales, Philip Good, Joan Gordon, Mary Goulbourne, Joel Grill, Marcia Grossberg, Mary L Hardison Gunn, Dierdre Herrera, Valerie Jackson, Hjalmar A.



Jorgensen, Youssef Kelada, Jerome Kraus, Howard Levin, Morty Levine, Nilsa Mangual, Carol Marker, Claire N. Martes, Dennis Massey, John J. McElroy, Hugh McHugh, Pearl Mennell, Margarita Mercado, Samuel Merson, Mary H. Murphy, Stephen M. O’Brien, John P. Clark, Aldo Palatini, James Wren Patterson, Robert Pfefferman, Diane Poland, Vincent R. Polimeni, Betty Potash, Govind Prabhu, Mimi Raimondi, Yakov Raykhman, Raymond Riccio, Marjorie Roachford, Mary Sakalian, Adele Schlapik, Peter Schweitzer, Victor Sedhom, Janice Sommerville, Marian Taylor, John M. Toman, Michael Tuccio, Elaine Turkel, Roberta Van Laven, Annie Vento, Dorothy Wadsley, Rose Weiss-Fischler, Joan Whitsett, Margaret Williams, Kay Wilson.

**ACTIVE OSARC MEMBERS**

[Continued from Page 8]

Ingrid Johnson  
Marilyn Johnson  
Barbara Jones  
Flora Jones  
Roslyn Jones  
Hjalmar Jorgensen  
Raymond Jorgensen  
Amy Kahn  
Melvin Kalmanowitz  
Herschel Kaminsky  
Frances Keenan  
Jeffrey Keller  
John Kelly  
Betty Kenner  
Alfred Klein  
Marian Konstan  
Henry Korobelnik  
Jerome Kraus  
Irving Kreindler  
Jane Kronholtz  
Richard Kucera  
Adele Kwaw  
Judith Layzer  
Jeannette Lee  
Kaye Lee  
Rosanne Levitt  
Andrew Lewis  
Martin Lewis  
Joyce Liechenstein  
William Linhart  
Lillie R. Lockhart  
Leopold Loher  
Johnnie M. Lovejoy  
Chien Sau Lu  
Hattie Lucas  
Flora Lucchese  
Rose Maconi  
Henry Mandel  
Nilsa Mangual  
Angela Marino  
John Maroney  
Donald Marshall  
Claire N. Martes  
Ralph Martinez  
Martha Masnyj  
Peter Mastropolo  
Roslyn Maxwell

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Samuel Merson  
James Meyer  
Carol Michaels  
Joseph Mickens  
Caroline Miles  
Helen Mitchell  
Sallie Monk  
Barbara Mont  
Charles Montalbano  
Gloria Morales  
Dan Morgan  
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Michael Murphy  
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Kathleen Neary-Burns  
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Larry Pappert  
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Lucille Urma Parris  
Anita O. Payne  
Elba Pelaez  
Robert Pellicci  
Delores Peloso  
Anthony Penel  
Millicent Perry  
Robert Pfefferman

Mary Ellen Phifer  
Jack Pilchman  
Arlene Pitt  
Pauline Pon  
Douglas Potts  
Peter A. Prestia  
Carl Prisco  
Lon Protzel  
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Risa Puld  
Mimi Raimondi  
Edward Rasquin  
Marylin Reed  
Thomas Reed  
Theodore Reich  
Claus Reinisch  
Laura Reisman  
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Dolores Rice  
Dolores Richards  
Shirley Ricks  
Edna Riley  
Gwen Riley-Roberts  
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Maurice Robinson  
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Ed Ruettiger  
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Gerald Sanchez  
Joseph Sanchez  
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Marc Sawyer  
Therese Sbano  
David Schapiro  
Joseph Schatz  
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Larry Schonfeld  
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Peter Schweitzer  
Thomas Seelye  
Marilyn Shapiro  
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Bernice Stephens  
James Stewart  
Cele Stolzenberg  
Penelope Stubbs  
Margaret Suite  
Thomas Tallarico  
Tuly Tanenbaum  
Jean Taylor  
Marian Taylor  
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Herbert Wasserman  
Rose Weiss-Fischler  
Alyce White  
Grace White  
Joan Whitsett  
Lillian Williams  
Margaret Williams  
Bettye Wilson  
Kay Wilson  
Bassanio Wong  
Simeon Wright  
Phyllis Zito

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Hakimah Al-Zahra  
Carmen Alfaro  
Tristan Allas  
Alice Allen  
Clifford D. Allen  
Leslie Allen  
Joseph Alvarez  
Marsha Ambrose  
Paul Anderson  
Aspacia Andros  
Robert Angarola  
Jean Anmuth  
Florence Appelstein  
Arthur D. Aptowitz  
William A. Archipoli  
Kenneth Asbedian  
Hanacho Atako  
Steven August  
Robert Backes  
Don Baharav  
Malkit Bains  
Ingrid Balady  
Mary Barlow  
Charles Baroo  
Rene Bash  
Richard Barth  
Barbara Batts  
Charles Beckinella  
Rose Beer  
Judith Beiss  
Ruth Bell  
Joanna Belt  
Diana Benitez  
Carolyn Bennett  
Elaine Silodor Berk  
Herman Berkowitz  
George Bernett  
Earlene Bethel  
Vidyadhar Bhide  
Adona Blake  
Helen Blecher  
Elizabeth Borden  
Carmine Borzelli  
Carol Bowers

Willie Bowman  
Anthony Brancale  
Esther Brody  
Joyce Bronstorph  
Yvonne Broughton  
Bertha Mae Brown  
Carol Brown  
Herbert Brown  
Richard Brown  
Rosemary Brown  
James Bucchino  
Priscilla Budden  
Rachael Burchard  
Brian Burke  
Theresa Burke  
Kenneth Burton  
Patricia Burton  
Joseph Bushe  
Joseph Buster  
Neville Caesar  
Eugene G. Calvert  
Milton Campbell  
John Campobasso  
Joseph Cappiello  
Burton Carlin  
Carmella Carmello  
Joseph Caron  
Phyllis Carr  
Louis Celi  
Janice Cerra  
Peter Chan  
Koshy Cherian  
Ida Chin  
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Elsie Colon  
Marlene Connor  
William Considine  
James Corleto  
Hannibal Coscia

Peter Costa  
Ted Cox  
Stanley Cutchins  
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Marilyn Daitsman  
Dolores Daniels  
Joaquin Grey Davila  
Ralph Delise  
John Dellecave  
Rochelle DiCristofalo  
Vincent Digesu  
Anthony DiLeonardo  
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Carla A. Drije  
James Duffield  
Walter J. Dugan  
Martina Elam  
May Engler  
Gloria Erardy  
Linda Erickson  
Joyce Eversley  
Camille Fatto  
William Fellows  
Joan Fillot  
Georgia Finch  
Jacquelyn Fleming  
Harold Fowler  
Branda Fox  
Allan Fraser  
Beverly Freierman  
Manny Friedman  
Ella Gales  
Aralesi Gamboa  
Lorraine Gewirtz  
Marguerite Ghartey  
Shirley Gilliam  
Mary Giraldi  
Edwina Glasco  
Temi Gluck  
Myrna Gonzalez  
Pedro Gonzalez  
Myra Goralski  
Bernice Gordon

Marjorie Gordon  
Tom Gorse  
Sheila Gorsky  
Eli Gottlieb  
Sybil Gowdy  
Stanley Granat  
Eleanor Gray  
Shirley Gray  
Susan Greenhouse  
Stephen Gregor  
Ira Greinsky  
Joel Grill  
Mary Gropp  
Frank Gulino  
Tilak R. Gupta  
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Claire Hall  
John Hannigan  
Robert Hansen  
Frances Nadine Hapaz  
Sandra Hardison  
Michael Harris  
John M. Hastey  
Chandra Hauptman  
Elizabeth Henderson  
Jacquelyn Henderson  
Robert Henke  
Paul Henry  
Mary Hillman  
Solomon Himelfarb  
Joseph Holdampf  
Novell Hopkins  
Azeeza Hurston  
Myron Hyman  
Maria Ibanez  
Haydee Inclan  
Brenda Ann Jackson  
Evelyn Jackson  
Margaret Jackson  
Pearl Jackson  
Valerie Jackson  
Edwina Jenkins  
Mary E.L. Jennings  
Gloria Jimenez  
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