

January  
2021  
Vol.29 No. 1

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## OSARC

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# OSARC newsletter

## OSARCers Hold Virtual Holiday Party As 25 Members Gather On Zoom

By Helen Hanigan-Kosuda, OSARC Chairperson

**A**s we enter 2021, your OSARC officers would like to wish you and your loved ones a new year filled with health, happiness and the ability to connect with family, friends, and fellow retirees.

On December 9<sup>th</sup>, we held a “virtual meeting” via Zoom, in place of our monthly luncheon meeting and guest speaker in the union office. We are pleased that this experiment worked well and has started to answer the need we all feel to get together.

After calls were made and emails sent, many of you decided to accept the invitation sent out by OSA Media Services Director Rob Spencer to join the meeting. Some were already familiar with Zoom as a videoconferencing tool; others tried it for the first time with the help of a neighbor or friend.

We had about 25 people online in gallery view and it took a few minutes for members to secure their audio and video feeds, but Rob and other members walked them through the steps. Some decided to join only by phone, but again it was a joy to hear those members’ voices.

OSARC Co-Vice Chair Bob Pfefferman was unable to attend, so we gave his report on the phone banking of OSA retirees, which he organized in the months prior to the November presidential election, assisted by New York City Central Labor Council political affairs director Lucia Gomez. Bob noted how “pleasantly surprised” he was by the enthusiastic response of his fellow OSARCers who offered to help out with the project.

We reached out to OSA retirees in Florida and Pennsylvania to encourage votes for the Biden/Harris ticket. We found that many expressed appreciation for the outreach and remarked how nice it was, not only for the voter information and discussion of the Democratic platform, but to reconnect through us with the New York City that they lived and worked in for so many years. With this information, we on the committee are discussing how to reach out and bring them into virtual meetings during this pandemic period.

Colleen Cox, a long time OSARC member and former OSARC co-chair, mentioned “how good it was to see everyone” after so many months. She noted that, in making phone calls prior to the meeting, she was reconnecting with dear friends that she hasn’t seen or heard from over these past months and got caught up on their lives and concerns. Colleen shared her frustration that, while online for the virtual meeting, her wife was giving her trouble, but she did stay on long enough to hear the presentations.



OSARCer Rosanne Levitt accompanies holiday singing on our December Zoom call (interpreted in artwork by OSARC Treasurer Teddy White.)

(Continued, page 2)

**Next Organization of Staff Analysts' Retirees Club Event**  
**Virtual Meeting • February 10, 2021 • 12:30-2:30**

Virtual Meeting On Zoom • Information On Registration By Email

## OSARC Officers 2020-2021

Chair.....Helen Hanigan-Kosuda  
 Vice-Chair.....Joan Borovoy, Bob Pfefferman  
 Treasurer.....Hattie Thomas  
 Secretary.....Theodore White  
 COMRO Representatives.....Joan Garippa, Mark Lewis, Jay Warshofsky



Newsletter Editor/Writer: Rob Spencer  
 Reporter/Writers: Andrea Behrens, Kathryn Nocerino, Solomon Friedman,  
 Bob Pfefferman, Jay Warshofsky  
 Art: Theodore White Photos: Andrea Behrens, Rob Spencer



(Continued From Page 1) She shared this as a way of reminding us all that things may not be perfect in the world of videoconferencing, but it is worth giving it a try because the result is the ability to join together and see old friends and, perhaps, make new ones.

We had one OSARC retiree, Leoila Zeigler, online from Barbados where she travels for the winter. Leoila called in on her phone and her voice was clear and lively!

Colleen Cox received a call from former OSARC Co-Chair Fred Ranzoni after the meeting. He apologized for missing a voicemail and email invitation, but agreed to join us for the January 13<sup>th</sup> meeting as his wife is familiar with Zoom.

OSARC Treasurer Teddy White reached out to OSARCers Eileen Pentel and Rosanne Levitt who have often participated in the entertainment at many of the previous years' holiday parties. Eileen read an adapted Hannukah-oriented version of "The Night before Christmas," while Rosanne, at her mini-keyboard, sent us out on a "good note" playing a Christmas carol, to which many added their voices.

Andrea Behrens, who has been adding ideas to the mix for our meetings, noted how wonderful it was to finally get together and see everyone. She remarked on how "touched" she felt by the memorial tribute made during the meeting, during which we read aloud the names and agencies of our fellow retirees who passed away during the past few months. Her sentiment was echoed by others and, for many, it was a unifying moment in the meeting.

We then had a sharing of experiences by individual members who told us how the COVID-19 lockdown restrictions were affecting them. As we listened to each story, we could identify with the range of emotions from frustration

and boredom to loneliness and anxiety.

Joan Borovoy, who stepped up to become an OSARC Co-Vice Chair recently, facilitated the turn-taking on Zoom and then segued into sharing free online resources for seniors, ranging from exercise and hobby groups to lectures and performances in music and art. Joan suggested that we make this sharing of resources an ongoing part of our monthly agenda and the members present agreed that this would be helpful, and even fun.

As we concluded the meeting, we asked for feedback. It was agreed that we would continue the virtual meetings on the second Wednesday of each month, sharing resources and incorporating speakers wherever possible who will give presentations on the accustomed topics of taxes, finance, health and politics relevant to union retirees. Following a Story Corps format, we will also allow room for the sharing of personal experiences during the lockdown.

We'll have a report from the January 13<sup>th</sup> meeting in the next issue and we urge members to try and join us February 10<sup>th</sup> on Zoom. Rob Spencer will be sending out the emails. The first will ask you to register for the meeting if you want to join. The next email will provide you with the invitation and link. Just go to that email a little before 12:30pm and click on the zoom link in the invitation. If you want to use your phone instead to dial in, use one of the phone numbers at the bottom of the invitation email.

One new feature of the January meeting, ending on an upbeat note, was a performance by a young musician who plays guitar with a progressive group, but who played a mixture of music for us.

In February, we will have a speaker on taxes. If you have questions you'd like the speaker to address, you can email them to Andrea Behrens in advance of the February 10<sup>th</sup> meeting at [abehrens7@gmail.com](mailto:abehrens7@gmail.com).

We looking forward to seeing you on Zoom on February 10<sup>th</sup>!

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OSARC's December 9<sup>th</sup> virtual meeting on Zoom in gallery view.

## Dues Are Not Due For 2021

In deference to State rules about social gatherings, OSARC has been unable to hold in-person meetings since February. Hard to believe, but we have gone 10 months without seeing each other in person. However, by obeying proper public health protocols, we are doing our part to keep each other healthy. In the Spring, we had the "pause," Governor Cuomo's fancy word for sheltering in place. Then we had the "thaw" as summer arrived and we learned to enjoy takeout and outdoor dining and mask wearing.

In December, we held our first virtual meeting on Zoom and we hope to try to approximate the usual monthly

schedule with virtual meetings online going forward.

After three physical issues of this *Newsletter* were mailed to you by our team of OSARC volunteers in early 2020, we have only been able to send out one edition in digital form - and now a second digital issue for January.

We therefore thought it would be fitting to announce that OSARC will forgo dues collection for 2021. We are hopeful that by 2022, physical meetings and the costs that accompany those meetings will have returned to normal and we will go back to our traditional dues collection procedures.

That said, if you wish to nonetheless make a contribution for 2021, we are putting a contribution form in with the emailed version of this *Newsletter*.

Either way, we will be sending this *Newsletter* to all retirees for whom we have a personal email address. We recognize that not everyone has computer access or an email address. Unfortunately, it is the most time-efficient and cost-effective (and the safest) way we can distribute the *Newsletter* during the pandemic.

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## Thank You

OSARC extends a thank you to Edna Fraylon who was kind enough to make a contribution of \$50 to the work of OSARC in 2020. Thank you Ms. Fraylon for your generosity!

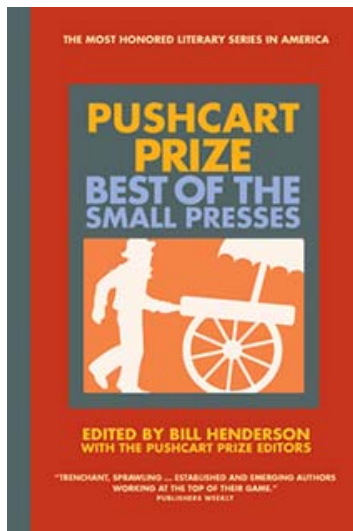
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## Congratulations!

Kathryn Nocerino, OSARC member, and contributor to this *Newsletter* from time to time (see "Hello Darwin!" elsewhere in this issue), informs us that a short essay/memoir called "Wimmin in the Arts," which appeared in an anthology earlier in 2020, has been nominated for this year's Pushcart Prize which honors the best work published in the nation's small presses. Winning work is reprinted in an anthology volume which will be published in the Fall of 2021.

Kathryn's contribution, she reports, was situated amidst works by much better-known writers. She notes that "I was, needless to say, thrilled. Whether I win or not, this is a great honor." She had a long conversation with the anthology's publisher, who told her she wants to collaborate on a future project. Kathryn hopes that the nomination will make it easier for her to acquire a literary agent, noting she "hasn't had one for years." The *Newsletter* wishes Kathryn the best in the prize hunt, her agent search, and her future writing.

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## In Memoriam

We regret to report the passing of sixty-one (61) retirees and ten (10) active members. Articles in memory of Manny Friedman, Bill Douglas, Louis Starkey and Fred Lieber appear elsewhere in this issue.

First, the retirees: **Jack Pilchman** retired in 1995 as an Associate Staff Analyst at the Department of Personnel. **Dorothy Mason** retired in 1992 as an Associate Staff Analyst at HRA. **Kirsten Telemaque** retired in 1990 as an Associate Staff Analyst at HRA and spent her retirement years in Mexico. **Henry Beceiro** retired as a member of the Marine Engineers Beneficial Association at the Department of Transportation. **Boushra Ghaly** retired in 1992 as a Supervising Systems Analyst at New York City Health + Hospitals' Harlem Hospital Center. **Martha Masnyj** retired in 2000 as an Associate Staff Analyst at the Dept of Homeless Services. **Bernice Roach** retired as an Administrative Community Relations Specialist in 2019 at the Administration for Children's Services. **David O'Brien** retired in 2005 as an Associate Staff Analyst at ACS. **Gary Washington** retired in 2020 as an Administrative Staff Analyst at ACS. **James Corleto** retired in 1995 as a Staff Analyst at the NY City Police Department. **Lyn Beth Alraimouny** retired in 2018 as an Administrative Staff Analyst at HRA. **Paul Anderson** retired in 1994 as an Associate Staff Analyst at HRA. **Ruth Bell** retired in 1989 as an Associate Staff Analyst at the Board of Education. **James Green** retired in 1994 as a Staff Analyst at the Human Resources Administration. **Barbara Scott** retired in 2014 as a Staff Analyst at the Finance Department. **Carmella Carmello** retired in 2001 as a Senior Healthcare Program Planner Analyst at the NYC Health + Hospitals' Bellevue Hospital Center. **Nona Volk** retired in 2001 as an Associate Staff Analyst with HRA. **Elliott Sussman** retired in 2018 as an Admin Staff Analyst at ACS. **John Rose** retired in 1998 as a Staff Analyst at DHS. **Donald Hartnett** retired in 1996 as an Associate Staff Analyst at the Department of Environmental Protection. **Gloria Erardy** retired in 1994 as an Associate Staff Analyst at the DOP. **Arnold Herskovitz** retired in 2014 as a Staff Analyst at the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. **Lorraine Coleman** was an active Admin Staff Analyst at the NYPD. **Hedvah Shuchman** retired in 2001 as an Associate Staff Analyst at the Department of Transportation. **Carl George** retired in 2016 as an Associate Staff Analyst at ACS. **Dorothy Carrier-Smith** retired in 2019 as an Associate Staff Analyst at the Department of Transportation. **Mortimer Sullivan** retired in 2002 as an Associate Staff Analyst at NYPD. **Earl Savery** retired as a member of the Marine Engineers Beneficial Association at DOT. **Donald Weinberg** retired in 2002 as an ASA with HRA. **Ronald West** retired in 2009 as a Staff Analyst with the Department



Nona Volk



Edna Riley

of Health. **Marie-Anne Koeglere** retired in 2002 as an ASA with the Department of Transportation. **Antonio Mendez** retired in 2017 as an ASA at the Department of City Planning. **Edna Riley** retired in 1992 as an Associate Staff Analyst at HRA. **Stanley Granat** retired in 1990 as a Staff Analyst at the Board of Education. **Richard Pellecchia** retired in 2002 as an ASA with the Mayor's office. **Dolores Richards** retired in 1995 as an ASA at the Human Resources Administration. **Louis Celi** retired in 2001 as an Associate Staff Analyst at NYCHA.

**Anthony DiLeonardo** retired in 1996 as an Assistant Systems Analyst at NYC H+H's Elmhurst Hospital Center. **Marlene Bowen** retired in 2000 as an ASA at DHS. **Laura Grulich** retired in 2019 as an ASA at Youth Services and Community Development. **Willie Jackson** retired in 2015 as a Staff Analyst at Finance. **Elizabeth Johnson** retired in 1996 as a Systems Analyst at Kings County Hospital in HHC. **Phyllis Karasik** retired in 2000 as an ASA at HRA. **Paula Miller** retired in 1992 as a Staff Analyst at the Comptroller's Office. **Van Hazel Pridgen** retired in 2010 as a Staff Analyst at Small Business Services. **Larry Thornton** retired in 2018 as an Admin Staff Analyst at the Department of Probation. **Irvin Loewenstein** retired in 2008 as an ASA at DOT. **Shirley Brugman** retired in 2000 as an ASA at DOHMH. **Paul Gettler** retired in 2012 as an Admin Staff Analyst at HRA. **George Abdelshaheid** retired in 2018 as a Staff Analyst at the Human Resources Administration. **Barbara Batts** retired in 1994 as an ASA at HRA. **Noel Worrell** retired in 2002 as an ASA at HRA. **Sandra Hurston** retired in 2011 as a Staff Analyst HRA. **Franklin Ortiz** retired in 2016 as an Administrative Staff Analyst at ACS. **Haripal Bisnath** retired in 2006 as a Supervising Systems Analyst at HHC. **Henry Makowsky** and **Robert Ruger** both retired as Marine Engineers Beneficial Association members at the DOT.

And now, the ten actives: **Carol Ann Williams** was an active Staff Analyst at the Human Resources Administration. **Stanley Greenberg** was an active Administrative Staff Analyst at HRA. **Nadine Bryant** was an active Administrative Staff Analyst with the Department of Environmental Preservation. **Eric Johnson** was an active Staff Analyst with the Department of Housing Preservation and Development. **Fatos Kaba** was an active Administrative Staff Analyst at NYC Health + Hospitals. **Andrea Wilson** was an active Health Services Manager at the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. **Michael Cotton** was an active Senior Management Consultant at NYC Health + Hospitals. **David Falk** was an active Administrative Staff Analyst at HRA. **Adam Abuhameda** was an active ASA at the Department of Environmental Protection. **Hiram Jackson** was an active ASA at the Department of Education.

*The Newsletter* extends its condolences to the families and friends of our late brothers and sisters.

## Honoring Manny Friedman

Manny Friedman, who passed away in 2020, was a long-time OSARC activist and, for two years from 1997-99, he served as OSARC's Chairperson. Later, he was a fixture on the mailing committee that sends each issue of this *Newsletter* to you, often taking buckets of *Newsletters* to the local post office on 23<sup>rd</sup> Street by himself.

We honor his memory by re-printing the following article, first published in 2012, on the occasion of OSARC's 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, based on an interview with Manny by Ellen Lazer which appeared among several tributes to early OSARC activists.

"When Manny Friedman retired from the City at the end of 1992 as a labor relations hearing officer, he was not a member of the Organization of Staff Analysts, yet joining OSA's Retirees Club was a natural for him. "My friend Jim McKeon told me he was chair of a new retiree group," he said.

Little did Manny know then that he would succeed Jim as OSARC chair for two years. Manny became an anchor of the new group. He chaired the monthly meetings, worked on mailings and the newsletter, found guest speakers and arranged the annual trip. "The activities we had back then were similar to what we have now, but we only had 300 members in 1997," he said.

"It's interesting that, as the union matures, of course we get more retirees and more OSARC members. Yet, we still see only 40 or 50 people come to OSARC meetings, even though many retirees live only a few blocks away and pay dues. It's a strange phenomenon."

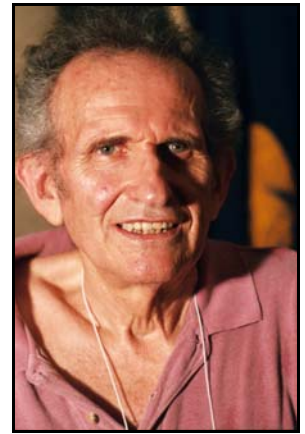
A veteran of the Human Resources Administration (HRA), Manny had been an active member of Social Service Employees Union/Local 371 before he transferred to labor relations. Except for Jim McKeon, he didn't know any of the OSA retirees until OSARC was formed, but he was aware of OSA as a union from its very early beginnings.

Manny said his OSARC membership provides him the opportunity to meet and work with wonderful people. "I only live 20 minutes from the union office, and I had been president of the HRA Running Club, so I had experience running an organization [no pun intended]. I had done a newsletter for the Running Club, too. I knew how to do those kinds of things."

Manny says that OSARC is a very valuable organization for retirees. "What happens is we go to work and come in contact with people and issues that are important to us. As a member of a work community, you are very much in touch. Being a retiree, it's easy to be completely out of touch.

I go to Local 371 union meetings and it keeps me in touch. And when you retire and go to OSARC meetings, you find out what the retirees are doing. That's very, very important."

Manny is also a longtime member of the committee that mails the *OSARC Newsletter* to members. He said, "So at the



Manny Friedman



Manny on the way to the post office with boxes of OSARC Newsletters

meetings and the mailings and through the *Newsletter*, you see what other retirees are facing. The potential is there to get together and act on something.”

“When I was chair, I got people to get together and come in to the union office and do the *Newsletter*.” He recalls that the computers the union had at the time were old and the word processing program rudimentary, but the group got the *Newsletter* out. “The minutes of meetings are at the heart of the *Newsletter*. It reports what went on. Forty people may come to a meeting, but the *Newsletter* keeps all of us in touch. And that’s

why we are members.”

Always a dog devotee, Manny stays physically active, tending to three dogs who need a lot of care. He believes in making yourself useful, wherever needed, finding time to help people with computer issues, and even helping people move things. Manny also enjoys reading, especially history and memoirs.

One of Manny’s most “striking” memories of his days as a City employee is more than 40 years old. “When I came to work in 1966, I was still probationary. I think I came to work in June, the current contract expired, and we were out on strike four months later. I worried whether I would have a job to come back to. It was an unsettling feeling.”

“I think a lot about today’s most important labor issues – the attacks on retirees, on our pensions, benefits, and health care. The push back against it is not that good. We need to defend what we already have. The idea that retirees and our benefits and pensions are the cause of any of the problems America is facing is ridiculous.”

“The idea that government doesn’t do anything right is just plain wrong. It builds roads, runs the subway, provides the water supply, arranges for sewage, provides health care, such as vaccinations that are important for health and longevity, and maintains a clean environment. These are very successful things that the government has done. Providing for these vital needs has nothing to do with the private sector. It’s the work of the government.”

“A little more positive education would go a long way. City workers’ benefits and wages are being vilified. I am in defense of civil servants, City workers, and all the good we’ve accomplished. In HRA, we provide crisis intervention; help for desperate people. Our workers are there for them.” “Municipal workers are unsung heroes. What they do is visible. Restaurants are inspected, streets are cleaned, we can breathe the air, turn on the tap. Unions need to make the defense.”

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## In Memoriam: Bill Douglas

In 1984, when OSA was still a professional association and not yet a fully-recognized union, A. William Douglas, was elected as a Delegate-at-Large on soon-to-be OSA Chair Bob Croghan’s slate. Bill had been active in building the union for a number of years before it gained its first official members in 1985. He had previously served as a Grievance Representative for three years with Social Service Employees Union/Local 371 of DC37.

In 1984, Bill had also just been appointed to Associate Staff Analyst as a result of the Committee To Move The List, which activists including Bill had helped initiate. It was the latest step in an HRA career that would ultimately extend to more than three decades.

Within OSA, for more than a decade, Bill served as one of three OSA Delegates-at-Large and, later, as OSA’s Vice-Chair, before he retired in 1996 as an Associate Staff Analyst at the Human Resources Administration.

For many years after his retirement and until his passing, Bill continued to serve the union as one of the Trustees of the Organization of Staff Analysts Welfare Fund.

Prior to his retirement from City service, Bill was on the staff of the HRA Office of Psychiatry as a field liaison administrator and was education liaison to the Office of Staff Development and Training. He held a Master of Social Work degree from New York University and a School Social Work License. After he retired, he started a second career as a psychotherapist working in private practice.

Bill was a frequent attendee at OSARC luncheons. At the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of OSARC in 2012, Bill said he “loves working with OSARC because of the camaraderie, support, friendship and good lunches, while gaining lots of valuable and practical information.” He added, “I am proud to be a member of OSARC. It is a great group.”

Over the years, OSARCers returned that admiration, with regular applause for Bill’s electric-guitar stylings, which were a welcome feature of the Club’s annual December holiday party for more than a decade. OSARC extends its condolences to Bill’s family and friends.

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Bill Douglas



Bill Douglas plays guitar for OSARCers at one of the December holiday parties.

## Remembering Manny Friedman

By Bob Pfefferman, OSARC Co-Vice Chair

Manny Friedman was a friend of mine and I took hard the word of his passing. He was as eccentric as the East Village location where he had lived for decades. He had a sly, dry sense of humor that entertained me at the bar on Friday nights in the 1980s, but his “motor mouth” was less appreciated while we ran endless loops of Central Park together.



Manny Friedman with OSARC Executive Director Sheila Gorsky in 2002, holding a plaque honoring his OSARC service.

He had this banged-up old Volkswagen Beetle that got us to Van Cortlandt Park where we tried to conquer the cross-country running trails. Somehow, this motorized creature was cast in a bit part in a movie – *Boyz 'n the Hood*, I believe. The producers amazingly concluded that Manny’s four cylinder relic was an appropriate gang vehicle.

Manny served several years as the president of the legendary HRA Running Club. That team had numerous New York City sports street legends and they terrorized the other guys at the shorter distances. Manny was by no means a running terror, but he did the administrative work needed to allow these City employees to excel in their talent.

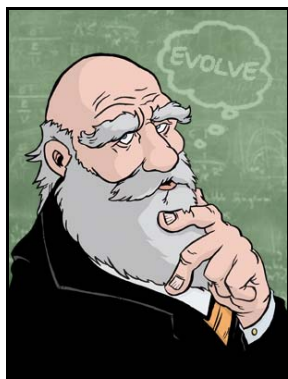
He was a vegetarian, a leftist, a trade unionist and an officer of OSARC. He was proud of his daughter, who was a competitive shot putter. In later years, I would occasionally run into him and his still constantly-moving mouth at the monthly OSARC Newsletter mailing parties.

I can see him walking his two dogs in East River Park. I'm privileged to have known him.

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## Hello, Darwin!

By Kathryn Nocerino, OSARC Member



For those of you who may be unaware of a specific and unusual public service called the Darwin Awards, a group of enthusiasts have been watching the news regularly since the 1980's. They focus their attention on headlines about extraordinary fatalities.

On the basis of this coverage, they give out a series of annual awards to those who, selflessly, cause their own removal from the gene pool through actions so flamingly, beyond-all-comprehension stoopid that they engineer

their own deaths.

For example, the winner of the 1990 Darwin Award was

a man (whom we will not name here) who decided to commit an armed robbery. It was a nice sunny day and the business he decided to hit was a gun shop. To enter, he had to walk around a police car which was parked out front. When the guy got inside, the policeman was having coffee and chatting with the owner before starting his shift. A few customers also stood around shopping. They were also packing heat, as they say. Question for you: how many people shot this idiot?

Not too long ago, a woman decided to stroll through the (closed to the public due to coronavirus guidelines) Yosemite National Park, in the region of the geysers. We all know about “Old Faithful,” that vertical sauna which has been erupting at precise intervals, resulting in great audience reactions and excellent picture postcards.

Actually, this part of Yosemite is an immense underground volcano, bigger than Mt. Etna which caused the extinction of Pompeii and Herculaneum. It’s bigger than Krakatoa. If it ever erupts, it will change the world's climate.

The subject of our fascination apparently stepped right up to the rim of one of these geysers, possibly waiting for it to do something. It did. No remains have yet been found. I nominate this stellar, though doomed, individual for the 2020 Darwin Award!

However, 2020 will have many fighting for that same honor; witness the maskless crowds in Lake of the Ozarks, the Spring Break partiers in Orlando and Ft. Lauderdale.

Genesis 1:26 says “And God said, 'Let us make humankind in our own image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the flying creatures of the sky, and over the tame animals, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creature that crawls on the earth.' And it was so.”

Biologists consider human beings to be at the top of the food chain, super-predators. Why? Because of that tangle of neurons which sits inside their skulls and, in theory, enables “thought.” The closer I look these days, the more I think biologists are wrong. How, otherwise, can you explain the behavior of a significant sub-group of humanity?

The U.S. is now at a total of more than 400,000 coronavirus deaths, a disproportionately large part of the world's number.

The scientific community already knows something about this illness and gains more knowledge steadily: it is wildly infectious and can be spread well before symptoms appear, during that awkward time when an infected individual feels good enough to commit an armed robbery upon a gun shop. Or to chug a margarita at some humongous pool party. Or to attend a New Year’s party with extended family and friends.

Science does not yet know how best to cure or even consistently treat the illness, but that did not stop a certain individual from promoting a series of measures of dubious value.

Another potential Darwin Award contender caused his own extinction by following this leading person's recommendations and swallowing fish tank disinfectant. Emergency rooms across the country reported a spike in cases where people drank Clorox and Drano. Salud!

A certain individual has been telling people, states, and localities that basic public health precautions are unconstitutional, which seems to be a Pavlovian signal to a significant group of voters. Well-funded and fully-lit-up mobs

have been doing things like hanging their governors in effigy and organizing armed parties to invade their Capitol buildings.

In 1776, five of America's founders got together and wrote something called "The Declaration of Independence." You might remember it. You probably read it in grade school. In it, they named three "unalienable rights," namely Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness.

There is a reason why they put Life first: basically, if you're dead, you cannot take advantage of the other two rights. A couple of hairdressers showed up sick with COVID during a three-day period in the same Missouri hair salon. Health officials now estimate they infected 140 people. "Nice haircut! I'll just tap on the inside of my urn to express my appreciation!"

I am not sure why things like this have been happening. Either people do not or they cannot think! (Don't tell the animals! They might get ideas.)

Let me throw out a few theories:

- 1) thinking is neither taught these days nor encouraged. Most schools operate solely based on fact-cramming and rote learning. Some even skip science and facts. In some parts of this country, students are taught that the earth was created in six days, people lived with the dinosaurs and evolution is the Devil's lie;
- 2) if you're not used to doing it, thinking makes your head hurt;
- 3) many Americans are infantile.

So, is this the end of the world? T.S. Eliot said, "...not with a bang, but with a whimper." Will a mindless subsegment of the world's population render the rest of us extinct?

Next issue (if there is a next issue) and if "The Lower Orders" have not become the last residents of the dead star we used to call Earth – I will get into Ethics.

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## Social Security COLA: Benefits Rise 1.3%

Social Security benefits will rise 1.3% for approximately 70 million Americans in January. The cost of living adjustment is based on the year over year increase in the Consumer Price Index (CPI-W) which tracks rises in costs of goods and services.

You should have received a notice of the COLA in December and that notice is also available in you're "my Social Security" online account, if you've signed up for one.

Among other changes, the amount of earnings subject to Social Security payroll tax also goes up in January to \$142,800.

The earnings limit for recipients who are younger than "full" retirement age increases to \$18,960. Social Security deducts \$1 from benefits for each \$2 earned over \$18,960.

The earnings limit for people reaching their "full" retirement age in 2021 will increase to \$50,520. Social Security deducts \$1 from benefits for each \$3 earned over \$50,520 until the month the worker turns "full" retirement age.

Once you reach "full" retirement age or older, there is no limit on earnings.

## In Memoriam: OSARC Officers Starkey & Lieber

We will likely all remember 2020 as our "pandemic year." As can be seen elsewhere in this *Newsletter*, the number of OSA retirees and active members who passed away since the last edition of this *Newsletter* is fairly large.

In addition to OSA Welfare Fund Trustee Bill Douglas and former OSARC officer and activist Manny Friedman, who are honored elsewhere in this issue, the *Newsletter* wants to particularly pause to remember two OSARC activists who passed last year.

**Louis Starkey** retired in 2000 as a Staff Analyst at the New York City Police Department. He came to his first OSARC meeting soon afterwards and made OSARC a regular commitment in his post-retirement life. In 2002-2003, Louis served as both the Club's Vice-Chairperson and its Treasurer. He would continue as Treasurer for two more years, from 2003-2005.

Many months, Louis could be found in the OSA office when the Mailing Committee sent out the monthly edition of this *Newsletter*. He was also a long-time member of the Hospitality Committee that arrived early on the day of the monthly OSARC luncheon to set up the room, accept food deliveries for the luncheon and create the nice "spread" for OSARC attendees to enjoy.

Sallie Stroman, who served as OSARC Vice-Chair when Louis served as Treasurer recalled that Louis was a "kind-hearted, gentle, thoughtful person. When you asked him to do anything, he would not hesitate." She celebrated the camaraderie that she enjoyed with Louis as fellow members of the Hospitality Committee.

Mary Hillman, who was OSARC's Co-Chair when Louis served as an officer noted "he was a hard worker who got along well with everyone in OSARC. He enjoyed helping out and setting everything up for the meetings." She noted that Louis was jovial and often told jokes which made the work go more quickly. She added "he was the sort of person who was willing to give of himself."

Louis's contributions enriched the lives of many other OSARC members. His consistent commitment to his fellow members is appreciated. He will be missed.

**Fred Lieber** retired in 2007 as an Associate Staff Analyst with the Taxi and Limousine Commission. He joined OSARC soon after that and became active in the Club. Fred eventually served four one year terms as an OSARC Co-Vice-Chair from 2010-2014. Fred brought a quiet demeanor to his work with OSARC. We honor his memory.



Louis Starkey



Fred Lieber

## Welcome: Recent OSA Retirees

We welcome the following recent retirees to the post-employment world and encourage them all to join the OSA Retirees Club, if they have not done so already.

Attend our meetings and events and please consider becoming active in your Club. The meetings are fun and informative and a way to stay in touch with your union brothers and sisters.

Ahlam Abdelaziz	HRA	Staff Analyst
Lorraine Alexander	ACS	Staff Analyst
Christine Allen	DOC	Admin Staff Analyst
Deborah Alleyne	HRA	Admin Staff Analyst
Kieran Avitabile	HRA	Staff Analyst
Robert Balsamello	NYCHA	Admin Staff Analyst
Roberto Barreto	PARKS	Admin Community Relations Specialist
Theresa Barry	DOT	Admin Staff Analyst
Brenda Besler	HRA	Associate Staff Analyst
Julie Bittman	ACS	Admin Staff Analyst
Roseann Boodhoo	NYPD	Staff Analyst
Frederick Brown	DDC	Admin Staff Analyst
Rena Bryant	DOHMH	Health Services Manager
Nicolae Busuioac	DOS	Sanitation Chief
Koshy Cherian	DOHMH	Admin Staff Analyst
Lily Cheung	DOITT	Associate Staff Analyst
Jesse Chin	HRA	Admin Staff Analyst
Ven-Chin Lee	HHC	Senior Consultant, MIS
Cathryn Collins	DEP	Associate Staff Analyst
Mary Colton	ACS	Staff Analyst
Alice Cox	Finance	Staff Analyst
Anna Cruz	Finance	Staff Analyst
Mary Cunningham	HHC	Senior Systems Analyst
Nickolas Cuttonaro	DOC	Admin Staff Analyst
Kathleen Davis	DOB	Associate Staff Analyst
Rosalyn Dawson	SBS	Associate Staff Analyst
Vidya Deonarine	DEP	Staff Analyst
Milagros Dominguez	Finance	Associate Staff Analyst
Chi Dong	DOS	Sanitation Chief
Kevin Duffy	DOS	Sanitation Chief
Jane Ellis	NYPD	Admin Traffic Enforce. Agent
Lisa Eng	DAQNS	Staff Analyst
Zinaida Epshteyn	DDC	Associate Staff Analyst
Aida Estepan	HPD	Admin Community Relations Specialist
Kim Estes-Fradis	DEP	Admin Staff Analyst
Amy Fei Lee	NYCHA	Staff Analyst
Cheryl Gagliano	NYPD	Admin Staff Analyst
Barbara Garrick	HPD	Staff Analyst
Vincent Giaimo	ACS	Admin Staff Analyst
Raisa Golubchik	PARKS	Associate Staff Analyst
Valerie Gunn	DOHMH	Associate Staff Analyst
Wanda Gurley	YS&CD	Staff Analyst
Firouza Harris	HRA	Staff Analyst
Patricia Harris	HHC	Utilization Review Management Coordinator
John Harrison	HRA	Staff Analyst
Anthony Hart	DOS	Sanitation Chief
Dawn Hunt-Coleman	HRA	Staff Analyst
Karen Jeffrey	HRA	Staff Analyst
Yvette Johnson-Parker	HRA	Admin Staff Analyst
Suzan Kallini	YS&CD	Staff Analyst
Michael Kelsch	DOT	MEBA
Doretha Lawal	HHC	Senior Consultant MIS
Deborah Lomax	DOHMH	Admin Community Relations Specialist
Shari Lopez	DHS	Admin Staff Analyst
Maria LoPrimo	DOITT	Admin Staff Analyst
Daniela Marcune	DOS	Associate Staff Analyst
Joann Marquez-Cabezas	NYPD	Admin Staff Analyst
Marina Mashkin	ACS	Associate Staff Analyst
John Mazella	Finance	Admin Staff Analyst
Joseph McAteer	DOC	Admin Staff Analyst
Sheila McMorris	NYPD	Admin School Security Mgr
Desmond McNamee	DOS	Sanitation Chief
Albert Meade	FDNY	EMS Chief
Margaret Millstone	DOHMH	Health Services Manager
Janice Mooney	DOS	Sanitation Chief
Rosemarie Moore	NYPD	Admin Staff Analyst
Claudia Myrie	DOT	Associate Staff Analyst
Andrea Nanna-Montgomery	FDNY	EMS Chief

Earline O'Garro	HRA	Staff Analyst
John Olatoyan	HRA	Associate Staff Analyst
Norine Outlaw	HHC	Training and Development Rep
Edward Ovadek	DOT	Supervisor of Traffic Device Maintainers
Lawrence Parkins	Finance	Admin Staff Analyst
Edwin Pauzer	DOC	Admin Staff Analyst
Vincent Pepe	HPD	Associate Staff Analyst
Somsiri Perera	NYCHA	Associate Staff Analyst
Roslyn Pierre	DOT	Admin Community Relations Specialist
Nicholas Pompeo	DOS	Sanitation Chief
Allison Randall-Smith	HRA	Admin Staff Analyst
Vera Ribakove	DOT	Associate Staff Analyst
Yousef Rizk	HRA	Admin Staff Analyst
Shirley Rucando	ACS	Admin Community Relations Specialist
Kim Best Simms	DOS	Staff Analyst
Sandra Stevens	DOT	Admin Community Relations Specialist
Barry Stuldivant	PARKS	Admin Community Relations Specialist
Brenda Taylor	HPD	Associate Staff Analyst
Harry Ternowitz	HRA	Staff Analyst
Loudes Torres-Esquilin	HRA	Admin Staff Analyst
Gary Washington	ACS	Admin Staff Analyst
Sheree West	HPD	Admin Staff Analyst
Carolyn Williams	HPD	Admin Staff Analyst
David Yerushalmi	TRS	Associate Staff Analyst

Welcome to all of these recent retirees!

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## Beware of Social Security Scams

The civil service newspaper, the *Chief-Leader*, had this useful reminder from Anny Rosario Diaz, the Assistant District Manager for Social Security's Downtown Manhattan office. "Scammers go to great lengths to trick you out of your personal information. There's a widespread telephone scam involving callers claiming they're from Social Security. The caller ID may even show a government number. These callers may tell you there's a problem with your Social Security number. They may also threaten to arrest you unless you pay a fine or fee using gift cards, prepaid debit cards, a wire transfer or cash. That call is not from us."

Her recommendations if you receive an unexpected call from someone alleging they are from Social Security: hang up right away; never give your personal information, money, or retail gift cards; report the scam at [oig.ssa.gov](http://oig.ssa.gov) to Social Security's law enforcement team at the Office of the Social Security Inspector General.

She notes that Social Security will not: threaten you; tell you that your Social Security number has been suspended; call you to demand an immediate payment; ask you for credit- or debit-card numbers over the phone; require a specific means of debt repayment, like a prepaid debit card, a retail gift card, or cash; demand that you pay a Social Security debt without the ability to appeal the amount you owe; promise a Social Security benefit approval, or increase, in exchange for information or money; or request personal or financial information through email, text messages, or social media.

Diaz says that Social Security may sometimes call you to confirm you filed for a claim or to discuss other ongoing business you have with them. They may mail you a letter if there is a problem or if you need to submit payments and that letter will have detailed information about options to make payments and the ability to appeal the decision. The agency will sometimes use emails, text messages, and social media to provide general information (not personal or financial information) on its programs and services if you have signed up to receive these messages. Be careful out there!



## My Friend IRMAA?

By Jay Warshofsky, OSA Board Member

Attention City retirees! The City may owe you money! Or, “who is IRMAA and why could it be your best friend?”

All New York City *retirees* are required to sign up for Medicare at 65. Your dependents are covered as well, for your lifetime.

The Medicare Part B premium that you and your dependent have paid in one calendar year is reimbursed by the City once per year, currently in April or May of the following calendar year. The “automatic” reimbursement amount is between \$110 and \$135.50 per month, depending on the year in which you first enrolled in Medicare. The reimbursement amount is frequently short of what you actually paid.

Check your most recent form S-1099 that was sent to you by Social Security in January of 2020. It will indicate the amount you actually paid for Medicare B in 2019.

If you were reimbursed this past April or May for less than the amount on the S-1099, the City will pay you the difference, but you have to file for it. The short payment may be made up of two (2) parts:

1. The “differential” is the difference between what you actually paid as the “Standard Medicare Part B Premium” and what was reimbursed to you. If this is the only difference, you must file the 2019 Medicare Differential Request Form. You can find the form on the Retirees tab on the OSA website at [www.osaunion.org](http://www.osaunion.org) or on the city’s Health Benefits Program website at [www1.nyc.gov/assets/olr/downloads/pdf/health/med-b-differential-form-2019.pdf](http://www1.nyc.gov/assets/olr/downloads/pdf/health/med-b-differential-form-2019.pdf)

2. If you also paid IRMAA (Income Related Monthly Adjustment Amount) it will be indicated on the benefits letter you received from Social Security in November of 2019. If you were not reimbursed for the full amount of IRMAA that you paid, you must file the Medicare Part B IRMAA Reimbursement form for 2017-2019 which is also on the Retirees tab of the OSA website at [www.osaunion.org](http://www.osaunion.org) or on the city’s Health Benefits Program website at [www1.nyc.gov/assets/olr/downloads/pdf/health/irmaa-form-2017-2019.pdf](http://www1.nyc.gov/assets/olr/downloads/pdf/health/irmaa-form-2017-2019.pdf)

Do NOT file both forms.

Remember, you can request reimbursement for up to three (3) past years. Additionally, as of this writing, all forms and supporting documents must be sent only on-line to OLR through the use of the special portal: [nycemployeebenefits.leapfile.net](http://nycemployeebenefits.leapfile.net)

Due to the pandemic, nothing can be sent to OLR by conventional US mail. It will be returned to you by the post office as undeliverable.

Please refer to the OLR website page: [www1.nyc.gov/site/olr/health/retiree/health-retiree-medb-irmaa.page](http://www1.nyc.gov/site/olr/health/retiree/health-retiree-medb-irmaa.page) for the official instructions.

Please note that the cartoon animation on their site may explain the instructions more clearly than the written instructions.

## Retiree Health Benefits Program & Deferred Comp Plan Access During the Pandemic

The City’s Office of Labor Relations Health Benefits Program has been closed since March and staff has been working remotely. Active and retired workers have been unable to either visit in person or, in some cases submit forms.

If you need to submit a form to HBP you can do it at this website: <https://nycemployeebenefits.leapfile.net>. At that website you can ask questions and upload forms for: health benefits enrollment, address changes, submission of death certificates or Medicare cards, provide proof of domestic partnership enrollment or changes, Medicare Part B reimbursement submissions and IRMAA submissions, and HIP VIP applications, among other transactions.

OLR recommends you submit any form or document only once to avoid processing delays. When uploading forms to this portal, OLR says you will immediately receive notification stating “Success! Your file has been received” upon completion of your document upload. There will not be a separate email confirmation.

You can also email inquiries and questions to [healthbenefits@olr.nyc.gov](mailto:healthbenefits@olr.nyc.gov)

PICA (injectibles and chemotherapy drugs) program questions can be directed to 1-800-467-2006.

Retirees can call (212) 513-0470 between 10am and 4pm, Monday through Friday (except holidays) to speak with a representative.

The City’s Deferred Compensation Plan can be reached at 212-306-7760. If hard copy forms and documents were sent to DCP’s mailing address after early March, you should resubmit them by email. Forms/documents can be sent via email to [NEWYRK@VOYAPLANS.com](mailto:NEWYRK@VOYAPLANS.com). That includes forms for the NYCE IRA. You can also fax forms to 844-299-2362. Only include the last four digits of your Social Security number, along with your name and address on all forms. Don’t send forms or documents via Express Mail as such packages can’t be accepted. All checks must be mailed to the DCP’s lockbox. Use the address indicated on the form you are submitting.

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## State Pension Fund Pledges To Decarbonize By 2040

In early January of 2020, the New York State Common Retirement Fund, whose sole trustee is New York State Comptroller Tom DiNapoli, released a plan to completely decarbonize its investment portfolio by the year 2040. According to reporting by Jake Offenhartz in *The Gothamist*, the \$226 billion pension fund will begin the process of no longer investing in certain fossil fuel companies, with the goal of transitioning the portfolio away from greenhouse gas inducing industries within two decades.

Activists and legislators praised the Comptroller’s actions, arguing that such divestment is a significant weapon in the battle against the climate crisis. The State Fund’s action, says *Gothamist*, is “the most comprehensive divestment commitment to date of any public fund in the world.”

The NYS Common Retirement Fund is the third largest

pension fund in the US covering over 1 million government employees and retirees.

DiNapoli plans a four-year review that will determine whether energy investments in the State portfolio can “provide investment returns in light of the global consensus on climate change.” If they don’t, they will be removed from the portfolio.

Thus far, the State has divested from 22 coal companies. Reviews of oil sands, shale oil and pipeline stocks are upcoming.

According to the State Comptroller “achieving net-zero carbon emissions by 2040 will put the Fund in a strong position for the future mapped out in the Paris Agreement.”

Meantime, here in the City, NYCERS has committed to divesting \$5 billion from fossil fuel companies, although the mayor has been criticized for overstating progress toward that goal.

The State move represented a turnaround for DiNapoli, the state pension fund’s only trustee, who had argued divestment could hurt the pension portfolio’s performance.

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## Around (Much Of)The World In Fewer Days Than Planned (Part 2)

by Andrea Behrens, OSARC member

*(Editor’s note: OSARC member and activist Andrea Behrens’ article about her recent world excursion by ship has been presented in two parts. The first section was published in the April/May issue of this Newsletter; the second and final section is presented here. We regret that the publishing of Andrea’s story has taken a longer time than it took for her to take her actual trip.)*

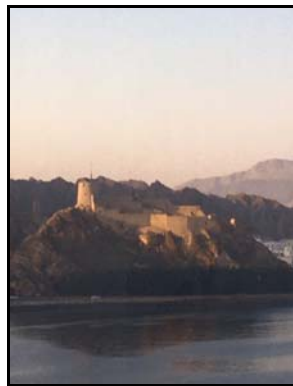
### THE BACKSTORY

In the first installment of my world voyage saga, published way back in the Spring of 2020, I traced my route from New York to Southampton, England and on through the Suez Canal.

The next leg of my world voyage was from Dubai to Singapore. However, before we even got to Dubai the captain made an announcement that there appeared be a serious health crisis going on in China with something that was being called the coronavirus.

We were told that we might be subject to a health screening prior to disembarking in any particular port. If anyone felt sick, we should call the medical office as soon as possible. Furthermore, guests, crew and visitors who had traveled from or through mainland China, Hong Kong or Macau in the past two weeks were not going to be permitted to board the ship. Pre-boarding screening was also being conducted for all guests and crew.

The next day, Wednesday,



Crusader-era watch-towers guard the Sultanate of Oman.

January 29, 2020, a letter was sent to all of us stating that because of the evolving situation with the coronavirus in China, Cunard would be replacing the call to Hong Kong on the 18th and 19th of February with a call to Singapore on those same dates.

People who were due to disembark in Hong Kong would now disembark in Singapore and stay on the ship as guests of Cunard. Cunard would also help with any necessary travel plans that needed to be changed. Needless to say, this created quite the buzz onboard ship, but we all looked forward to continuing onward and enjoying the rest of the cruise.

### TRIP SEGMENT 3: DUBAI TO SINGAPORE

After Dubai, we proceeded to the port of Muscat in Oman. Landing cards and transit visas were also handed out for Colombo, Sri Lanka, Phuket, Thailand and Singapore.

Muscat is the capital and largest city of the Sultanate of Oman. Oman is not part of the United Arab Emirates and has retained its own individual characteristics. The ruler of Oman, the Sultan Qaboos, who had ruled since 1970, had recently died on January 10, 2020 and the country was in an official state of mourning. Nonetheless, we we are able to go on our local tours.

Entering the port of Oman, you can actually see the old Crusader-era watchtowers that guarded the Sultanate from sea invaders.

On our tour of Muscat, we visited their new mosque – another gorgeous facility. One of my fellow travelers took the picture of me inside the mosque.

We also visited the Muttrah, which is the very old marketplace near the port. It is a shopping destination for residents and tourists alike. One of the main products that Oman is noted for is frankincense, which comes from a tree that grows only in their



OSARCer Andrea Behrens in the new mosque in Muscat.

country.

After leaving Oman, we would have several sea days before arriving in Sri Lanka. New speakers and entertainment came on board and one of the most interesting speakers was General Lord Dannatt, CGB CBE MC DL. Dannatt was a former commander-in-chief of the British army and had fascinating stories to tell of his military service. All the Brits and Aussies loved him!

Pam Ayres was another celebrity speaker who came on board. She is a very well-known and respected author and humorist in Great Britain and she gave several memorable talks over the next few weeks. She even wrote a poem about her time on board. Signed copies were available for sale, with the proceeds going to charity.

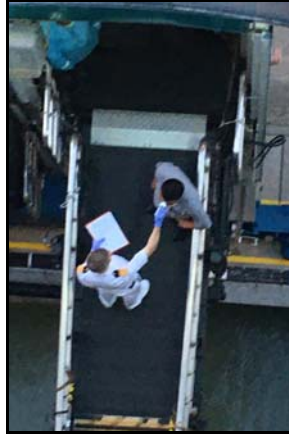
Our next port of call was Colombo, the capital of Sri Lanka, formerly known as Ceylon. Colombo has a wonderful mix of cultures, including a fabulous Buddhist temple that we toured. They also have a marvelous natural history museum.

We could have spent much more time there than the one hour we had available. And, yes, it was hot and humid!

After Sri Lanka, we were sailing along happily, on our way to Phuket, Thailand and expected arrival four days later. However, the world had changed and more changes were in store for us.

The Captain made the announcement that we would not be stopping in any port in Southeast Asia. *No Thailand, no Vietnam, no Singapore!* Furthermore, our next stop would be in Port Kelang, Malaysia to refuel and take on stores only on February 11. We would proceed on to Fremantle, Australia. Anyone who had been due to disembark in Singapore was now to travel to Fremantle with no additional costs. Only those who absolutely had to leave, because they had run out of medication or had other urgent needs, would be allowed to do so in Port Kelang, but they would not be allowed back on the ship once they left.

About 100 or so passengers left and the ship's medical officer was checking the few immigration people who had to come on board.



The QM2's Medical Officer checking those boarding the ship.

### AN EARLY DETOUR TO AUSTRALIA

Our original itinerary was modified greatly. We were now set to arrive in Fremantle, Australia on February 18, spend two days there, and then go to Darwin, followed by Yorkeys Knob. We would return to our original schedule at Airlie Beach on March 1. This involved a complete circumnavigation of Australia and a return to Fremantle as originally planned in the middle of March. They also gave every-one a \$250 onboard credit to help ease the pain.

On route to Fremantle, we would be crossing the equator. There is a long-standing tradition of having a "Crossing the Line" ceremony. This involves going before His Imperial Majesty, Neptune of the Deep (aka the QM2's Captain), his Queen and their Seaweed Court (other ship officers and entertainment staff) and other able aides to partake in the tradition of graduating from being a pollywog to a shellback. In groups of 20, we went before the Court and endured a ceremonial swabbing and then a clean-off dip in the pool. I survived – and have the certificate to prove it.



Andrea Behrens at the Perth War Memorial.

We finally arrived in Fremantle on February 18<sup>th</sup>, having had our own 14-day isolation at sea, with no cases of coronavirus on board. We only later found out that this was required by the Australian government before we would be allowed to dock. Australia is an amazing country and continent. Perhaps the only benefit of not being able to visit Southeast Asia was the opportunity of a complete circumnavigation of Australia.

Our first stop in Australia was the city of Fremantle, which was to have been our last stop. We stayed there overnight. The first day, I simply walked around the city, happy to be on land. Cunard had arranged for a free shuttle bus to take people into the center of the city, but it was only a five minute walk from the dock.

On the second day, we took a tour to the city of Perth, the state capital and biggest city in the state of Western Australia. They have a beautiful park and a very famous War Memorial. We also went to a wine tasting, had lunch in another winery and, then, took a river cruise back to Fremantle (see photos on this page). We left Perth at dusk and many small ships came out to accompany us as we exited the harbor on our way back to the ocean.

Darwin, the capital of the Northern Territory, was our next port of call. It was very, very hot the first day and I decided to take the "Leisurely Darwin" tour which is basically a bus ride. It was actually better than I expected. We visited the Darwin Botanical Gardens, which were fabulous. I also got my first glimpse of wildlife – wallabies who were just hanging out in the shade as we drove by.

After Darwin, we had several days at sea until our newly added port of Yorkeys Knob. Along the way, there was a special German brunch held for world cruise voyagers, the Fruschoffen! We also learned that many of the 600 or so people who had joined the voyage in Fremantle had gotten deeply discounted rates for the Australian portion of our cruise. Personally, I was very happy for anybody who could benefit from such a sale and was glad to have new faces on board.

However, in recognition of this and partial compensation for missing Southeast Asia, Cunard sent a letter to all remaining world voyage passengers stating that they were giving each of us a £1000 credit towards a future cruise. Of course, there were strings attached – it would need to be applied to a cruise booked no later than July 31, 2020.

Luckily for us, we had several Australians at our dinner table who were able to steer us to a great and fun activity in Yorkeys Knob. We took a full day



Wine tasting at the Sandalford Winery



Small ships escorted us out of Perth harbor.



Andrea and friend at the Brisbane Koala Sanctuary

excursion on the Kuranda Railway and Skyrail. The Kuranda Railway is a very rustic train that was built many years ago to get up into the mountains. It was a beautiful ride and at the top of the mountains was an old village of indigenous people. The Skyrail ride down took about an hour and we had amazing views over the canopy of the rainforest.

On March 1, we returned to our scheduled itinerary, with a stop at anchor in Airlie Beach and an excursion to the Great Barrier Reef. The catamaran which took

us to the Reef came right up to the side of the ship and we disembarked directly onto it. It took about 2½ hours to reach the reef itself and the views along the way were amazing.

I had been warned by OSARC member Jay Warshofsky that, in order to go snorkeling, one would have to get into a stinger suit for protection against jellyfish. I had envisioned a scuba diving suit and figured there was no way that was going to happen. However, it wound up being more like a big Spanx and I was able to get into one and actually go snorkeling on the reef! It was an amazing experience and I am glad I did it.



Some new friends at rest

Our next stop was Brisbane, which is the largest city in the Australian state of Queensland. Here, we took the opportunity to go to the Brisbane Koala Sanctuary where I had the opportunity to hold one and see many other indigenous animals.

The Sanctuary had many more animals than usual due to the recent wildfires!

From there, it was on to Sydney. I met up with an Australian friend our first day there and we spent the day going from one café to another, just catching up. The next day, I walked around the city myself and went to “The Rocks” right next to where the QM2 was docked. That evening, we went to the opera at the Sydney Opera House, which is a spectacular venue and was within walking distance of our ship.



The QM2 docked in Sydney, Australia

Sydney was also the halfway point of the complete world voyage from Southampton. Many people left the ship there and it seemed that not as many people got on. There had also been an aboriginal dance group due to come on board for entertainment purposes that

did not make it. The ship was not as full as it had been and we noticed quite a few empty tables in the dining room at dinner. We later learned that many people who had been due to come on board had cancelled and, in fact, anyone who had come via Hong Kong had their cruise cancelled by Cunard.

We arrived in Melbourne on March 8th as planned. Melbourne is the capital and the biggest city in the state of Victoria and the second largest city in all of Australia. It is known as a great arts center. Here, I took advantage of Cunard's courtesy shuttle into the center of town and did my own tour with new friends I had met on board.

Melbourne, like many other cities in Australia, has a wonderful transportation system that has free fare within the central business district and is extremely tourist friendly. The big event here for us was the world voyage dinner held at the Crowne Towers Palladium Ballroom that evening. It was a spectacular event with great entertainment, fabulous food, and guest speakers, including the president of Cunard, who had flown in from London just for the event.

The highlight of our stop in Adelaide was the old German town of Hahndorf. This town was established by German settlers who were not convicts! It is a very quaint town with a great sense of humor.

Our next to last stop in Australia was the city of Busselton on the southwest tip of Western Australia. Busselton is known for its jetty, a 2 kilometer wood pier that stretches out onto a coral reef. We had to anchor at sea and take a tender to the pier/jetty.

Finally, we arrived back in Fremantle on Saturday, March 14th for our last stop in Australia. Having been to Fremantle before, I decided to just walk around town and see some sights I had missed the first time. There were ominous signs of the virus' spread to Australia. (See empty shelves in a supermarket on the next page.)

Upon arriving back at the ship, there was an announcement that, due to the spread of the virus, it was uncertain whether the QM2 would be able to stop at certain planned ports. We were all given the opportunity to disembark at Fremantle and return home. We could stay on the ship, but we would go at our own risk knowing that all the ports might not be visited and that there would be no new entertainment on board and certain activities might be curtailed.

We decided to stay on board, since we did not have to be home and I do like cruising. I would estimate that three



Andrea Behrens at the Sydney Opera House



“Cowboy” in the town of Hahndorf Australia.

quarters of the people made the same determination.

In the words of Shakespeare, "Beware the Ides of March." The very next day, it was announced that the QM2 2020 World Voyage would be terminating in Fremantle. All passengers, except those who, for documented medical reasons, could not fly, would be disembarked, taken to hotels in Perth, and flown home from there as soon as possible.

So, my world voyage ended the next day. We left the ship, boarded a bus, and spent the next night at a luxury hotel in Perth. When no one showed up from Cunard, I called the London office in Southampton and spoke to customer service. They were aware of the situation in general. She took all of our information and, within an hour, we had flights booked for us back to the United States that very night.

We flew from Perth to Melbourne, then Melbourne to Los Angeles, then LA to New York City. The flights were on Qantas, which is my new favorite airline, and American Airlines. None of them were full, so we were able to spread out and get comfortable. We arrived back at JFK airport on March 18th around 8:30 PM.

All in all, I had a fabulous experience. Not quite what I planned, but certainly an adventure. And when I look back now, I see that I did actually go all the way around the world!



More Hahndorf humor.



Empty toilet paper shelf in Fremantle, Australia supermarket.

## Fun Fact: High Income Earners Have Already Paid All Of Their Social Security Taxes For 2021

In 2021, the cap on earnings subject to Social Security payroll tax rose to \$142,800. Meantime, the 4,000 people who earn over \$10 million stopped paying into Social Security by January 4, 2021. If earnings above \$400,000 were subject to the FICA tax, as has been proposed by President-elect Biden, Social Security revenue would rise by 7% this year, with increases by 12% in 2040. The Social Security Trust Fund would be fully funded until 2040. However, Biden's proposal would leave earnings between \$142,800 and \$400,000 untaxed. Others have proposed taxing all income, which would generate yet more revenue and fully fund the program for an even longer time. The AFL-CIO affiliated Alliance for Retired Americans noted it is outrageous that workers earning hourly wages pay a much higher percentage of income into Social Security than millionaires and billionaires."

## Biden Nominates Boston Mayor Marty Walsh as New Secretary of Labor

In early January, President-elect Joe Biden named Boston Mayor Marty Walsh, a former union leader with expertise in multiemployer pension plans to lead the US Department of Labor. If confirmed by the Senate, Walsh would be the first union member to serve in the position in half a century.

Walsh was elected Boston Mayor in 2014. Before that, he served as the president of Laborers' Union Local 223 and secretary-treasurer and general agent of the Boston Metropolitan District Building Trades Council.

Richard Trumka, president of the AFL-CIO, the national labor federation, said "as a longtime union member, Walsh knows that collective bargaining is essential to building back better by combating inequality, beating COVID-19 and expanding opportunities for immigrants, women and people of color.... Walsh has always been a fighter who understands the power of working people standing together for a better life."

Trumka noted that Biden has promised to be the "strongest labor president" in American history and added that "it will take an unprecedented effort from the president-elect and the Labor Department to recover from the failed policies of the past four years, which have harmed working people and our families." Trumka and the AFL-CIO have as a major legislative goal the passage of the PRO Act which would make union formation much easier than it presently is.

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## House Democrats Form Labor Caucus

By Solomon Friedman

In the aftermath of President-elect Joe Biden's November victory, House Democrats announced the formation of a new Labor Caucus with the aim of promoting a pro-labor agenda in Congress and connecting Representatives with unions and their leaders.

The Caucus was formed by Reps. Mark Pocan (D-WI) and Donald Norcross (D-NJ) who themselves have held union memberships in the International Union of Painters and Allied Trades and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, respectively.

Pocan and Norcross announced the Caucus' goals in a November 17 letter addressed to congressional leadership and the leaders of the House and the Senate appropriations committees. They were joined within a week by 50 Democratic members of the House and, in late November, added Reps. Debbie Dingell (D-MI), Steven Horsford (D-NV), Linda Sanchez (D-CA), and Tom Suozzi (D-NY) as Caucus co-chairs.

Passage of two pieces of legislation that Biden has promised to support, the PRO Act and the Raise the Wage Act, are on the Caucus' initial agenda. The Raise the Wage Act would raise the national minimum wage from \$7.25 to \$15 an hour and the PRO Act, short for Protect the Right to Organize, would make it considerably easier for unions to engage in union organizing drives.

The Caucus' agenda includes prohibitions on attempts by

federal agencies to approve employee contracts without union bargaining, proposals to block attempts to restrict union workers from using payroll deductions to pay union dues and a demand for an increase in government funding for Department of Labor programs.

The Caucus announced it would be seeking “not less than \$12.7 billion in discretionary appropriations for the Department of Labor, which would be “an increase of \$254 million above FY’20 and \$1.6 billion above the President’s request.”

The Labor Caucus is one of the ways in which the Democratic Party has been attempting to reinforce its historic alignment with union members and their families in this election cycle.

From Biden’s April 2019 Democratic primary campaign launch in Philadelphia, where he was surrounded by International Association of Firefighters’ members to a November 2 campaign stop in Pittsburgh, where he ended his general election campaign with a pledge to make union issues a priority of his presidential administration, Biden positioned himself as a champion of workers and their unions throughout his 18-month-long 2020 presidential bid.

“The only outfit that can deal with the abuse of power of corporate America are union(s),” Biden said in his Pittsburgh speech, delivered on the eve of the presidential election. “I warn you all, if I’m elected, you’re going to see the most pro-union president in American history.”

Many union voters took Biden’s words to heart as he won union households by an estimated 16 percentage point margin over Trump, according to exit polls, with Biden receiving 56 percent of the union vote and Trump 40 percent. With 20 percent of voters in the 2020 presidential election, union families were among the voting blocs that were decisive in delivering Biden’s victory.

“Joe’s always been a friend of working people,” AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka, who leads the largest federation of unions in the United States, told CNBC on Election Day.

While Trumka and other national labor leaders are convinced by Biden’s message of support for unions, others, like labor historian and University of Chicago professor Gabriel Winant, have been more skeptical of Biden’s track record.

“At no point in his career has Biden proven willing to take the slightest political risk on behalf of workers,” Winant wrote in a May 2019 op-ed for *The Guardian* after Biden launched his campaign. “His appearances in union halls occur when he needs something from labor.”

In the op-ed, Winant noted that during a 2011 Verizon strike, Biden, who was vice-president, vacationed in the Hamptons without giving any sort of endorsement of the work action. Winant added that Biden was unwilling to express support for Wisconsin’s public sector union workers in the face of concerted attacks by then-Governor Scott Walker.

Alex N. Press, writing in the left-leaning *Jacobin*, has also criticized Biden’s record on union-related issues, after Biden formed a labor transition team led by former Deputy Secretary of Labor Seth Harris. Press specifically panned

Harris’ work in The Hamilton Project think-tank, where Harris advocated on behalf of tech companies like Uber and Lyft in their successful push for California Proposition 22 which will classify their drivers as independent contractors instead of employees. Press noted that Harris’ appointment was an apparent contradiction for Biden since the president-elect indicated his opposition to the California ballot measure.

Still, Biden’s congressional allies like Labor Caucus Co-Chair Norcross are optimistic that the Biden administration’s potential collaboration with the Labor Caucus will be consequential in improving the livelihood of union families.

“Joe Biden’s incoming Administration understands the dignity of work and that workers’ rights are human rights,” Norcross said, “and working families deserve a bigger voice in Congress.”

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## COMRO Report - June 2020

The Coalition of Municipal Retiree Organizations (COMRO) meets monthly and brings together representatives of the retiree sections of municipal unions, including OSA.

The following coverage of their June 17, 2020 meeting held virtually on Zoom is based on minutes provided by Mike O’Keeffe via COMRO Secretary Eileen Moran. Mark Lewis and Joan Garippa attended the COMRO meeting on behalf of OSARC. The following issues were discussed:

- An article that stated that Social Security, which had previously been projected to be able to pay full benefits through 2035, may only be able to do so through 2029, due to changing economic conditions associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.

- The fact that NYCERS has been asking older pension recipients to verify their current identity information. The letter states that pension payments will be stopped if no response is made. The problem is that the forms need to be notarized, which has become difficult or impossible during the pandemic.

- The introduction of new medical ID cards with different member ID numbers for Medicare and health and drug services for many individuals.

- Opposition by the New York State Retired Public Employees Association to the New York Health Act, which would bring single payer health care to New York State, The group argues it might take away from existing retiree coverage.

- The need to pay attention to voter registration among City retirees in other states, including Florida and the need for City unions to get involved.

- The need to pay attention to actions by the Municipal Labor Committee on health care, since the MLC is being pressed by the City for cost savings in this area.

- The introduction of bills in the state legislature for early retirement incentives for active employees and the need for support by Governor Cuomo.

- An upcoming COMRO Corner column will be included in next month’s issue of *Labor Press*.

- Comptroller Scott Stringer sends out an economic analysis of the City every week by email. Stringer projects

that it will be two years until the city's tax revenues recover to the rate seen in early 2020. You can sign up for the weekly email on the Comptroller's website at <https://comptroller.nyc.gov>. Click on "Join Mailing List" and sign up for the Weekly Economic Update.

- The need to be wary of long-term solutions to short-term financial problems. The risks of austerity politics were discussed and the need to pay attention to possibly draconian cuts as occurred in the 1970's financial crisis.

- The fact that Governor Cuomo's administration had been cutting back on hospital beds and health care before the pandemic. Approximately 20,000 hospital beds have been lost on his watch, which led to a scrambling for beds during the peak of the early pandemic.

- Ideas for guest speakers were requested.

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## COMRO Report - September, 2020

The following coverage of the September 9, 2020 COMRO meeting is based on minutes provided by COMRO Secretary Eileen Moran. OSARCers Mark Lewis and Jay Warshofsky attended the meeting for OSARC.

The guest speaker, Xaver Kandler of NYRENEWS, began his presentation by giving a brief history of the organization and then proceeded to outline its current priorities. NYRENEWS is a statewide coalition of 250 labor, community and environmental membership organizations. Its mission is a racially and environmentally just transition of society away from fossil fuels. The transition will produce thousands of good, preferably union, jobs but must also protect workers displaced from the fossil fuel industry.

Poor and Black and Brown communities have been most harmed by pollution as they are most likely to live closer to waste processing or polluting industries like power plants. Justice requires prioritizing their need for cleaner air and fair access to new jobs in the transition away from fossil fuels.

Once the New York State Senate gained a Democratic majority, legislation to protect the environment became feasible. NYRENEWS pushed passage of the Climate and Community Leadership Protection Act which established New York in the forefront of progressive climate action.

However, said Kandler, Governor Cuomo gutted the stronger labor and environmental protections in the bill and failed to include the budgeting to achieve the goals of the legislation.

To foster the needed level of private investment in new environmentally safe energy, the state must spend \$7 billion per year for four or five years. Such investment could create 50,000 to 90,000 good green jobs in developing and servicing renewable energy systems and retrofitting to conserve energy consumption in existing buildings. Imposing fees on polluters will raise some money.

This will be a very tough fight, observed Kandler, especially with the fiscal shortfall from the pandemic. Yet the California wildfires have increased the public's appreciation of the urgency of the climate crisis.

NYRENEWS's campaign demands that reversing the climate crisis be included in the state's executive budget.

Building power in the state legislature and building the base of public support will facilitate passing a budget that includes the funding needed to begin the work of a just transition and protect communities.

Members suggested that COMRO form an environmental justice working group to address the dire climate crisis and invite retiree groups in our network to join this effort. It was put in the form of a motion, seconded and passed.

Another member anticipated a huge pushback from parts of labor against a transition to cleaner energy, so the focus should be job creation.

Stu Eber asked if apartments in New York City would now likely be fined if they don't meet the energy standards set in the "dirty buildings" bill that the Council passed. Kandler could not comment on the details of the City law. (Climate Works 4 All, a city coalition, is pressing the Council to help fund the retrofitting with low cost loans and grants and to include rent controlled buildings that were exempted from the first bill).

Absentee/mail-in ballots are due to be sent to voters by NY State by September 21. Everyone is encouraged to apply early for an absentee ballot and quickly return it.

Volunteers are needed to help get out the vote in states with large retiree populations. Most of our unions are helping with outreach in swing states like Florida and Pennsylvania.

COMRO asked for members to contribute columns for the COMRO Corner column in *Labor Press*.

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## COMRO Report - October, 2020

Mark Lewis and Jay Warshofsky attended the October COMRO meeting for OSARC. This article is based on COMRO's minutes for October.

Checks for basic Medicare Part B reimbursement for 2019 were sent out to eligible retirees in April of 2020. It was reported that reimbursements for IRMAA, the extra Medicare Part B Income Related Monthly Adjustment Amount for higher income retirees, would probably be delayed due to the closing of the OLR office. Any paperwork mailed to OLR on Cortlandt Street before the pandemic or since is likely still sitting in a mail sack, unopened.

In 2019, approximately 100,000 City retirees received basic Medicare Part B reimbursement and another 10,000 received IRMAA high income reimbursement.

There is also the Medicare Part B differential payment. If you were on Medicare before January 2016, chances are that you will be under-reimbursed by the basic payment and due the differential payment. If you started receiving Medicare after that date, the chances are that you will be reimbursed correctly in the basic payment, unless you are in an IRMAA situation because of your higher income. The differential payments should be made in March of 2021.

There is no indication when OLR, currently working remotely, will return to their offices on Cortlandt Street.

A reminder was made of the importance of the 1099 statement for 2020 from Social Security, which should be received in January of 2021. The form includes the amount

of Part B premiums paid in 2020.

The members discussed whether COMRO might be interested in having an environmental justice committee since the environmental crisis impacts retirees too. It was mentioned that several unions, including the NYS Nurses, DC37, and the Professional Staff Congress/CUNY did have environmental committees. Might COMRO members influence their parent unions to consider environmental concerns such as improving air and water quality. How does it fit into COMRO's agenda? A working group was established to pursue the concept.

Members pointed out that retirees must respond to periodic checks by the City pension systems that they are still alive. NYCERS sends a request for affirmation to pensioners over 85. Those who fail to respond in a timely way find their pension is dropped and it can take six to eight weeks to have it restored.

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## COMRO Report - November, 2020

Mark Lewis, Joan Garippa and Jay Warshofsky all attended the November COMRO meeting for OSARC.

Bob Croghan, the Chair of the Organization of Staff Analysts and current member of the Municipal Labor Committee's Steering Committee addressed COMRO and focused on the MLC's current dilemma as the City faces massive revenue losses associated with the pandemic.

The MLC, which brings together the leaders of municipal unions, also negotiates health benefits collectively for all of the city's unions and has a steering committee of 20 members.

Bob mentioned that the closing of theaters and restaurants impacted the city's economy as tourists stayed home. Tax revenue has dropped substantially.

The push by the City to save money is being addressed incrementally, union by union, rather than by MLC as a whole. For example, the UFT delayed raises currently due to its members in order to avoid layoffs. During the fiscal crisis of the mid 1970's, union pensions were loaned to NYC when banks refused to provide credit. Under Giuliani, pension funds bought City bonds as well.

At this moment, Bob noted, we cannot predict how severe the budget shortfall will be as the prospect of additional federal stimulus or state aid is still unclear.

The UFT's deal has been extended to DC37 and the Fire Officers. They're accepting that it's preferable to loan the money to the City rather than risk losing it or members to layoffs.

In the short run, New York City has some reserves, but not enough to cover the broad loss of revenue.

Bob was asked whether the MLC is looking at single payer, Medicare For All or the New York Health Act for potential health cost savings? Bob said, not really. They have just been dealing with the plague and economic shortfalls not the larger health cost savings.

Bob was asked about the likelihood of early retirement incentives. He said early retirement only happens when the City wants it. Mayor DeBlasio has been slow to come around, but unions have raised the issue of a buyout. NYC

should be doing it as soon as possible.

Bob was asked about issues facing retirees. He said NYC is always pushing for retirees to pay more. The MLC's opposition to that is unchanged. The City wants to put the burden on workers instead of the rich. Those who represent the private sector, corporations and the rich claim public employee benefits are overly generous and expensive.

He noted that OSA had requested alternate schedules and more remote work, which could make for less stress on mass transit.

Bob was asked if there is any retiree representation on the MLC. Bob said, no, but that active members expect to become retirees, which insures their support. The largest unions (UFT, DC37) are dominant within the MLC since they together represent between 200,000 and 300,000 City workers. He said the UFT has been strong on protecting retiree benefits.

Neal Frumkin observed that there's a danger that NYC will ask retirees to pay part of their health insurance premiums. He stressed the need for labor to stay firm on no long term givebacks to resolve short term problems.

Conversation turned to Medicare Part B reimbursements, which continue to pose problems. While most may have received the basic Part B reimbursement in April 2020, the higher income IRMAA payments due those with higher incomes have been delayed for many, since the offices of the City's Health Benefits Program have been closed.

One person who filed for IRMAA for 2016 was refused, with OLR saying the City only goes back three years. Towards the end of the summer, people were told to apply for IRMAA through an Emblemhealth email and snail mail began to be returned to senders due to a lack of storage space. OLR's operating remotely impacts folks who are trying to change health plans too. Jay Warshofsky said that even the computer savvy often are having a hard time.

As of mid-November there was nothing further from the Governor or the Mayor about an early retirement incentive, but public agencies may face loss of experienced staff anyway as folks unhappy with working under current restrictions leave.

Many aspects of the pandemic relief package expire on December 26th.

At the time of the meeting, New York State was still counting absentee/mail ballots so results in a number of state legislative races were still not clear. New York is one of the states that does not permit mail ballots to be counted until after the actual election day.

COMRO Environmental Justice committee held its first meeting and decided to set as goals providing education to unionists on environmental issues and facilitating environmental justice groups within unions.

Vinny Montalbano will be the speaker at COMRO's December meeting.

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## COMRO Report - December, 2020

Mark Lewis, Joan Garippa and Jay Warshofsky attended the December COMRO meeting for OSARC.

Neal Frumkin raised the issue of support for all public workers who are trying to access Social Security. He noted that some cities and states with public pensions have opted out of Social Security, leaving their retirees vulnerable when the locality fails to keep its pension assets appropriately funded or goes bankrupt.

Cities in Rhode Island, he observed, went bankrupt which allowed them to dramatically reduce pension obligations. Public pensions are not protected by Federal protections like The Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA), a federal law that sets minimum standards for most voluntarily established retirement and health plans in private industry. ERISA provides protection for individuals in these private plans.

COMRO's guest speaker was Vinny Montalbano, a columnist for the *Chief-Leader* civil service newspaper. He asked those present to identify the aspects of the labor agenda they most wanted to discuss. Members prioritized health care and prescription drug costs, retirement incentives related to the COVID crisis, environmental justice and the urgent need to protect workers.

Cuomo's failure to support several important electoral reforms, including automatic voter registration when securing a driver's license, were mentioned. While the State Senate may have a veto proof majority after the November election, the legislative leadership seems reluctant to take on Cuomo.

Montalbano believes the Governor is unlikely to offer early retirement incentives and, if anything, will move toward even leaner pension prospects going forward.

He cited the devastation of New York City's 1975 fiscal crisis and the public's unfortunate view of public servants. He expects similar outcomes unless significantly more money is made available to the City by the feds.

Municipal labor has fortunately begun advancing revenue to the City to avoid austerity. The Independent Budget Office (IBO) advocates a Pied-a-Terre tax on the very wealthy with investments in NYC apartments that are vacant most of time. Obviously, the public sector must talk about raising revenue. Most current retirees have direct experience of the 1975 fiscal crisis.

Several untapped revenue sources include the stock transfer tax, fees on Amazon deliveries, as well as treating capital gains income the same as wages. Jay Warshofsky reminded COMRO that we now collect the stock transfer tax but return it immediately to Wall St. John Hyland suggested that avoiding austerity would require multi-year budgeting.

COMRO attendees asked "What keeps labor from being aggressive about its agenda? Why isn't Labor's agenda prioritized?"

Montalbano found that labor leaders form relationships with public officials and believe that moving labor's agenda depends on maintaining good relations with those they helped elect instead of pressing those they supported to deliver on their campaign commitments.

Since Reagan, the public at large and even the

government have embraced an anti-tax agenda to the detriment of working people. In 1975, organized public employees saved the city by loaning their pension plan funds to the City. They failed to negotiate power for themselves in the process, leaving the city's recovery to the Municipal Assistance Corporation (MAC) board, which imposed harsh austerity measures, with thousands of layoffs and service cuts. Now, organized labor seems no more ready to demand power in dealing with the fiscal crisis imposed by the pandemic. Montalbano said that rank and file activists need to put pressure on their union leaders to demand more.

On another front, Ed Hysyk reported that people who were trying to switch health plans during the designated reopener period in the fall of 2020 had a very hard time, due to procedural changes imposed during the pandemic. Even though the time to submit forms was extended, some still found it impossible to complete the process.

A motion was made that COMRO support the City allowing retirees to make plan changes in the fall of 2021, in addition to the usual pattern of retirees only having the option to change plans in even numbered years.

COMRO passed the motion and Neal Frumkin will draft a letter on COMRO's behalf to the DeBlasio administration to advocate that retirees have the opportunity to change health providers in the fall of 2021.

IRMAA reimbursement specifically and Medicare Part B reimbursement generally appears to remain an issue. Most City Medicare-eligible retirees received the first basic reimbursement payment but the second for any underpayment lagged until mid-November.

Those who applied after March, 2020 needed to do so electronically after the OLR office closed. Some who filed by mail for reimbursement for 2019 had their paperwork returned by the Post Office as undeliverable once OLR's office closed. Jay Warshofsky indicated that his electronic submission in May 2020 had not gotten a response yet.

Members are advised to keep records of what they have sent, and when, so they do not lose out due to the time limits the city imposes.

Potential speakers suggested for COMRO in 2021 included Phoebe Flaherty from ALIGN Climate Works 4 All and Hank Sheinkopf, a political consultant (for a post-election assessment), and State Senator Gianaris.

Artwork: Teddy White



# Trump Issues Executive Order Stripping Federal Workers of Union and Civil Service Protection

by Solomon Friedman

[Editor's Note: As we went to press a few days after President Biden's inauguration, Government Executive magazine was reporting that the president would be issuing an executive order reversing the policies outlined in this article. We'll have more about this in the next issue. Meantime, take a minute to read and understand former President Trump's approach to the civil service.]

For more than thirty years, the civil servants who went on to form the Organization of Staff Analysts were refused unionized status by the City of New York. Those who would eventually be part of the Analyst series were labeled as managerial and/or confidential. Even in its organizing drives today, the union is almost always met by attempts to keep those who wish to be unionized in unorganized status because they are supposedly "managerial/confidential."

Today, we are 5,000 strong and our members enjoy due process rights and job protections in part because they are union members and in part because they are civil servants. But, it is important to remember that all of our members were once considered hire-at-will, fire-at-will employees.

So, it may or may not surprise you to learn that in late October 2020, in one of its many attempts to undermine federal unions and the federal civil service, the Trump administration issued an executive order that created a new Schedule F within the federal civil service. Schedule F bypasses protections given to federal government employees under The Pendleton Act of 1883, which was intended to both protect members of the civil service from political firings as a result of changes in the leadership of the executive branch and to ensure that these agencies operate in the interests of the public independently from the political will of the executive. Civil Service laws protect citizens from cronyism and patronage with hiring based on merit and fitness for the job.

Under the new executive order, agencies would be permitted to move an unspecified number of "confidential, policy-determining, policy-making, or policy-advocating positions" into the new category. According to a column in the October 29<sup>th</sup> *Washington Post*, they would be "exempt from merit-based competitive hiring and denied due process rights in disputes with supervisors. They could be fired at will for such offenses as not showing sufficient loyalty to the president."

The Trump administration claimed the creation of Schedule F would help expedite the removal of ineffective employees. "Separating employees who cannot or will not meet required performance standards is important, the executive order reads. "And it is particularly important with regard to employees in confidential, policy-determining, policy-making, or policy-advocating positions."

The executive order set a deadline of January 19 – the day before Joe Biden's

scheduled first day in office – for government agencies to turn over a list of employees subject to reclassification under Schedule F.

In the run-up to that deadline, federal unions filed lawsuits against the executive order and Congressional Democrats unsuccessfully attempted to block the order legislatively.

Rep. Carolyn Maloney (D-NY) said in a letter co-signed by 23 additional members of the Democratic leadership in late November: "Protecting the nonpartisan expertise of the career civil service is essential to the safety and security of the American people."

Meanwhile, federal Office of Management and Budget Acting Director Russell Vought indicated that 88 percent of his agency's workforce, or 425 employees, would be classified as Schedule F and therefore subject to replacement or termination under the new executive order.

Vought said he sees the executive order as an opportunity to fulfill Trump's 2016 campaign promise to "drain the swamp." He said, "President Trump is delivering on his promise to make Washington accountable again to the citizens it's meant to serve."

Good government groups, federal unions and Democratic legislators countered that, if anything, the creation of Schedule F would simply stock the government with more political creatures. Rep. Don Beyer (D-VA), who co-signed Maloney's November letter, argued that the executive order would only intensify partisanship in governmental agencies where career civil servants operate in the knowledge that they can do the public's business without threat of retaliation by whichever administration controls the executive branch at a given time.

Democrats were confident that the battle over reversing this decision could prove successful since congressional Republicans may not want the incoming Biden administration to have the power of making political appointments as Schedule F employees.

Beyer said, "some of my Republican friends have to be thinking about... do they really want us stuffing all the agencies with our Democratic operatives?"

Many Democratic legislators believe that President Biden has the power to simply reverse Trump's orders with executive orders of his own. We should know soon.



Artwork: Theodore "Teddy" White

# Happy Birthday to OSA Retirees Born in January



Hassan A. Abdelbaky, Sallie W. Adams, Deborah Aiken, Timothy G Alapo, Leslie Allen, Kenneth Alleyne, Adrienne D. Alpert, Thomas Anderson, Brenda M. Andrews, John Angelillo, Joan M. Antelman, Elaine Armstrong, Bosah Azikiwe, Steven Balicer, Moradeyo Bamigbade, Filippa Barcia, Jo Ann Basham-Germain, Maxine Batie, Denise Bell, Joanna Belt, Barbara Berg, Michael Bermudez, Deborah Bershada, Michael S. Bharose, Kamel P. Bishay, Julie Bittman, Andrea Bloom, Carmine Borzelli, Salwa Boutros, Paul Bowen, Barbara Bragg, Gwendolyn Bright, Hyman Brodt, Carolyn Brooks, Tina Brooks, Rosemary O. Brown, Gloria J. Brown, Michella C. Brown, Linda Brown, Donna Brown, Manuel Bu, Anna M. Budd, Roxana M. Calinescu, Azalia Cancela, Barbara E. Canning, Eve Charlack, Johnsie Cheatham, Gladys E. Chong, Himangshu S. Chowdhury, Clifford Clark, Margaret Clay, Joyce L. Cochran, Anne Cody, George Cohen, Sheldon Cohn, Rosalee Coleman, Exum Coley, Othon R. Collado, Gloria Colon, David L. Conlon, Maria Copps-Butler, Maria I. Cordero, Robert Crawford, Maria L. Crisci, Daniel T Cruz, Sadie Culler, Mark Cullum, Maureen B. D'Amato, Frank D'Ercola, Donald Dagress, Marilyn Daitsman, Lillybeth Davila, Marie Davis, Gail J. Davis, Edward Davis, Gary De Liberto, Henry Delgado, John Dellecave, Mary Eileen DePierro, Sybil DeVeaux, John DiFilippo, Philip J. Dinanzio, Jr, Silvio Dobry, Hugo Dominguez, Milagros M. Dominguez, Christine Dudley, Nancy Dueno, Dorothy Duncan, Loyola T. Eleutiza, Joseph Ellis III, David M. Emert, Aida M. Estepan, Gail M. Evans, Mary J. Fahy, Carrie B. Fair-Smith, Michael Feller, Philip B. Flaum, Jacquelyn Fleming, Barbara A. Ford, James L. Freaney, Grace Gabrielsen, Elizabeth Gacek, Jayne M. Galletta, Teresa K. Galvin, Joseph G. Garber, Joan Garippa, Calvin L. Gibson, Felicia R. Girona, Joan Gittens, Jeffrey Goldstein, Manuel A. Gonzalez, Eli Gottlieb, Sherman Gould, Jeffrey N. Gralto, Robert M. Granick, Marie Greco, Maureen Greeley, Laura J. Greenidge, Aida Gress, Monica Grima, Howard L. Gross, Frank Gulino, Claire Hall, Michael Hamilton, John Harrison, Elena Holmes, Michael Howard, George Hu, Maria A. Ibanez, Mourad Y. Ibrahim, Janet Isaac, Camille Isaacs, Mohammed Tazul Islam, Ramkumar S. Iyer, Carolle Jacques, Pauline M. James, Edwina Jenkins, Clifford Johnson, Patricia Jordan, Eileen V. Jordan, Linda Kavanagh, Delmira Kelly, Jane A. Kelly, Anne M. Kessler, Sheldon Kier, Ezard Knight, Nicholas Koulouris, Bruce F. Krueger, Deborah A. Kuha, Teresa B. La Neve, Jerry LaMura, Yvonne A. Laws, Joel Leichter, Michael Leinwand, Barry Levy, Laura Limuli, Stephen L. Lincke, Ramona S. Loftis, Shari Lopez, Maria R. LoPrimo, Irene F. Louie, Michel L. Louis, Janet Luke, Wayne S. Mackie, Daniela Marcune, Theodore Marcus, Nicholas Mardikos, Paul C. Margolis, Marshall H. Marroquin, Norma E. Mason, Eloise McDuffie, Kevin P. McGrath, Michael McKenna, Krishan G Mehra, Velarie F. Melvin, Louis Michel, Linda A. Miller, Ruth Mingoia, Mary T. Mitchell, Thomas P. Monahan Jr., Thomas E. Monahan, Charles A. Montalbano, Donna Mulgrave, Patrick Mullan, Frida Myaskovsky, Sara A. Nanton, John F. Nash, Madeline Nazario, Frances D. Nelson, Edmarie B. Nicholas, Edgar Nogueroles, Michael T. O'Toole, Rati R. Panchal, Doris L. Parker, Olivia Parker, Eugene Parker, Renee Patterson, Carol Ann Payne, Antony J. Penel, Nauford C. Phipps, John M. Picariello, Diane Pierre-Vaughn, Judie Pierre-Louis, William Platzek, Lee E. Pleva, Dorothy Ragin-Primus, Peter Reese, John Ricker, Oswald Rivera, Maria Rodriguez-Matos, Pablo Rodriguez, Cora L. Ross, Scott Rothman, Leon Rozenbaum, Shirley S. Rucando, John R. Ryan, Benjamin Salisbury, Cheryl L. Samuels, Marc H. Sawyer, John P. Sellers, David Serrano, Larisa Shikhman, Arlene Siegel-Fishman, Ina E. Sinclair, Karen A. Smith, Maureen L. Somma, Eric Sorenson, Janette M. Springle, Joan E. Sternberg, Sandra D. Stevens, Larry Thompson, Adoracion Tolentino, Ervin Torres, Vanis A. Trapp, Joseph Paul Tulce, Aleida Valentin-Rodriguez, Nelly Varnyan, Edelmira Ventura, Reina De los Angeles Vera, Carlos M. Viguera, Narciso R. Villafuerte, Monserrate Villegas, Sally Rofofsky Waldman, Carolyn Walton, Trujue Wang, Joseph P. Warfield, Saul Weber, Juan Wilkins, Dolores Wilson, Spencer L. Wong, Thomas Woods, Annette J. Wyre, Russell Yates, John Y. Yoshida, Robert T. Zappala, Phyllis M. Zito, Zeth Zuniga



## OSARC MEMBERS FOR 2020/21 [continued from page 22]

Elaine L. Greene	Frances Gutilla-Barris	Charles Harris	Lisa Hernandez	Jacqueline Holmes-Boyd	Raffaella C. Irace
Gary Greene	Gregory L. Hackett	Patricia Harris	Aurea Hernandez	Anthony Holness	Josue Irizarry
Bruce Greengart	Myra Hailey	Anthony Hart	Cynthia Hernandez	George Hoo	Ana M. Irizarry-Ibrahim
Susan Greenhouse	Phyllis Hailstock	Carol A. Harvey	Lydia Hernandez	Winston Hoppie	Amparo Irizarry-Meyers
Pauline Green-Hutchinson	Arthur R. Haimo	Margaret C. Harvey	John P. Heron, Jr.	Patricia Horan	Camille Isaacs
Laura J. Greenidge	Victor Hainsworth	John M. Haste	Diana Herrera	Polly B. Horton	Mark Isacoff
Lewis Greenstein	Mattie Hairston	Stanley Hauptman	Fred J. Herschkowitz	Marion E. House	Mohammed Tazul Islam
Stephen H. Gregor	Marguerite Hajduk	Chandra Hauptman	Arnold Herskovitz	Charles Houston	Rosalie S. Jackson
Fay D. Grey	Edmund Hall	Mildred B. Hawkins	Sheldon Herzberg	Carolyn Hubbard	Valerie Jackson
Thomas J. Griffin	Claire Hall	Edward Hayes	Lorraine T. Hickey	Hilary Hudson	Evelyn G. Jackson
James Griffin	Ushah Hamid	Charles D. Healy	Thomas E. Hickey	Clark Hudson	Jeffrey A. Jacobs
Helen R. Griffith	Alicia M. Hamill	Amy E. Hebert	Robert J. Highsmith	William Hundley	Renee Jacobsen-Gomes
Monica Grima	Brenda A. Hamilton	Iris Hecht	Diane L. Hildebrand	Lynette Hunkins	Daniel J. Jacobson
Sandra M. Gross	Helen Hanigan-Kosuda	Susan A. Hill	Susan A. Hill	Dorothy Hunt	Christobal Jacques
Martin Grower	John R. Hannigan	Mary Hillman	Perry L. Hilton	Barbara Hunt	Linda I. Jaffee
Alfred Guerra	Robert L. Hanrahan	Perry L. Hilton	Isalyn Hinds	Robert P. Hurlay	Janice James
Frank Gulino	Barbara Hanrieder Stewart	Edmond Husbands	Christopher W. Ho	Edmond Husbands	Calvin James
Josefino D. Gumpeng	George T. Hansen	Lorraine Iachetta	Sylvia Hodge	Lorraine Iachetta	Elsie T. James
Albert Gundersheimer	Holly Hansen	Lawrence M. Iannozzo	Maria Holland	Lawrence M. Iannozzo	Gloria S. James
Mary L. Gunn-Hardison	Katherine Hansen	Maria A. Ibanez	Andrew Hollander	Maria A. Ibanez	Pauline M. James
Bhagwati P. Gupta	Frances N. Hapaz	Lawrence Ikenga	Donna Holm	Lawrence Ikenga	Anna M. James
Wanda Gurley	Geraldine Hardiman	Victoria A. Illery	Isabell Holmes	Victoria A. Illery	Marvel A. James
Raisa Gutman	John Harper	Richard Immediato	Elena Holmes	Richard Immediato	Michael A. James
Estelle Guttbinder	Gussie Harris	Margaret Ingram		Margaret Ingram	Alonzo Jamison Jr.

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Ina C. Jenkins  
Javier Jimenez  
Colleen Jinks  
Marilyn John  
Daniel P. John  
Marilyn Johnson  
Ingrid Johnson  
Carolyn Y. Johnson  
Louis A. Johnson  
Sylvia Johnson  
Lorraine P. Johnson  
James L. Johnson  
Yvette Johnson-Parker  
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Flora Jones  
Wilhelmina Jones  
Shirley Jones  
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Samuel Kosofsky  
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Jerome S. Kraus  
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Karen Lanzillo  
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Ralph Lapaix  
Dolores E. Lapin-Curley  
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Wendy Lau  
Monte Lavner  
Doretha A. Lawal  
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Robert S. Lawrence  
Floyd C. Lawrence  
Judith Lawson  
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Rev. Kaye Lee  
Gerald W. Lee  
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Amy Fei Lee  
Betty K. Lee  
Joel Leichter  
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Lisa J. Loren  
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Hattie L. Lucas  
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Linda S. Lukas  
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Alex K. Lukose  
Novella E. Lundy  
Paul F. Lurie  
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Cheryl Luwisch  
Tatyana Lvovskaya  
Patricia J. Lynch  
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Allyson Mackey  
Rose M. Maconi  
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Marshall H. Marroquin  
Elsie Martell  
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Nellie Gomez Martinez  
Eve Martinez  
Octavio R. Martinez Jr  
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Raymond Matias  
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Lefitia Maxwell  
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Karen A. Mayo  
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Lillithe E. Meyers  
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Mark S. Miller  
Sabrina Miller  
Charles P. Miller  
Deborah A. Milliman  
Natalie Millner  
Margaret Millstone  
Brian M. Milzoff  
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Paula Mintz  
Rachel Miranda  
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Stephanie Mitchell-Cloud  
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Irene Murray  
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Edmarie B. Nicholas  
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Veronica Nnabugwu  
Elizabeth Nobile  
Kathryn Nocerino  
Samson Nougues  
Michael G. Ntemar  
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Adolphus E. Nwaghanata  
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Jill Obertubbesing  
Procesion G. Obra  
Susan O'Brien  
Raffaele Ocello  
Eva Ochmanska  
Josephine O'Connell  
Joyce O'Connor  
Earline Y. O'Garro  
Lawrencea Ogunleye  
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Carmen Olenick  
Michael F. Olenick  
Sheldon Oliff  
Patricia C. Ollison  
Murray F. Olsen  
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Simeon Orimogunje  
Samuel Orimogunje  
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Nora Paris-Simonetti  
Carolyn Parker  
Olivia Parker  
Eugene Parker  
Doris L. Parker  
Dolores Parson  
Frances Pascale  
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Hemang Patel  
Catherine R. Patterson  
Bertdella Patterson  
Francis G. Paturas  
Edwin Pauzer  
Carol Ann Payne  
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Eileen Pentel  
Vincent Pepe  
Somasiri Perera  
Elizabeth Perez-Ode  
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Hank Perlin  
Millicent Perry  
Diane Peskin  
Frank J. Peters  
Gail Peterson  
Dean Petrelis  
Doreen Petrus  
Gloria Pettyjohn  
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Phyllis Pittinsky  
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Jennifer Potts  
Linda Pressley  
Ronald Prester  
Lawrence Price  
Helene A. Price  
Van Hazel Pridgen  
Evelyn Marie Pridgen  
Myron Priester  
John F. Prior  
Lon Protzel  
Jeanine R. Prud'homme  
Louis Puccio  
Daniel A. Puiatti  
Risa Puld  
Jacob Punnoose  
Mohammed Abdul Qadeer  
Julia Quagliano-Lynn  
Felix M. Quezada

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Jameel Rahaman  
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Nilda I. Ramirez  
Parmanand Ramlochan  
Allison Randall-Smith  
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Ambati M. Rao  
Raisa Rapoport  
Sharon Rashada  
Edward Rasquin  
Diana Recor  
Robert Redmond  
Thomas M. Reed  
Ralph Reed  
Peter Reese  
Joseph D. Reeves  
Robert Reeves  
Jeanette Reid  
Deborah L. Reid  
Barrington Reid-Hart  
Fred Reinowitz  
Fred Reiser  
Richard A. Reiskin  
Joseph Reklis  
Gloria Resto  
Alex Reyes  
Margaret Rhoden  
Harold Rhodes Jr  
Cheryl A. Richards  
Delores A. Richardson  
Eleanor Richardson  
Annette J. Richardson  
Jeannette Richardson  
Johanne Richardson  
Ruby E. Richardson  
Dorothy L. Rick  
John Ricker  
Martin L. Ricketts  
Patricia Riley  
Lewis Riley Jr.  
Gwendolyn Riley-Roberts  
Stacey Rindler  
Raymond W. Riordan  
Rudolph K. Ripp  
Nilda Rivas  
Rev. Dr. Bruce Rivera  
Ronald M. Rivera  
Iraida Rivera  
Margarita Rivera  
Edwin Rivera  
Joyce Rivers  
Yousef Rizk  
Walter M. Roberts  
David J. Robinson  
Kevin Robinson  
Pablo Rodriguez  
Joan N. Rodriguez  
Rebecca Rodriguez  
John F. Rohde  
Angel L. Roman  
Barbara L. Roman  
Irwin P. Romaner  
Richard Ronde  
Jeanette E. Roper  
Rolando Rosado  
Allan H. Rose  
Francine Rose  
Lewis B. Rosenblatt  
Sarah Rosenfeld  
Cora L. Ross  
JoAnn C. Ross  
Philip Roth  
Norman Roth  
Lloyd M. Rotker  
Margarette Rousseau  
Regina Royal  
Dorothy G. Royal  
Leon Rozenbaum  
Miriam Rubman  
Shirley S. Rucando  
Robert H. Ruger  
Esther Ruiz  
Nancy E. Russell  
Rhona M. Russell  
Ouida Russell  
Dominick Russo  
Lorraine M. Russo  
Stanley P. Ruszkowski  
John R. Ryan  
Linda M. Ryan  
Monette R. Sachs

Gloria Saenz  
 Sandra Saenz-Ramirez  
 Mina Sakovich  
 Sandra Salinas  
 Larry Sampson  
 Gloria Samuel  
 Claire R. Samuel  
 Darryl D. Samuels  
 Cheryl L. Samuels  
 Helen Samuels  
 Ana M. Sanchez  
 Gerald Sanchez  
 Joseph Sanchez  
 Doris Sanky  
 Flora E. Santana  
 Gerard Santiago  
 Carmen M. Santiago  
 Veronica Saunders  
 Ora C. Savoy  
 Marc H. Sawyer  
 Sheila M. Sawyer  
 Asma Sayed  
 Michael J. Schady  
 Edward H. Sisenwein  
 David B. Schapiro  
 Minna Scharf  
 Talyana Scharfstein  
 Linda M. Schechter  
 Barbara E. Schechter  
 Melvyn Schecter  
 John Schiavi  
 Don Schimelfenig  
 Elaine Schirmer  
 Marcia Schneider  
 Joan M. Scholvin  
 Larry Schonfeld  
 Robert Schott  
 Barbara J. Schwartz  
 Peter J. Schweitzer  
 Catherine Scimone  
 Laurence Scallo  
 John P. Scrofani  
 Lorraine Rose Scrofani  
 Mary C. Seabrooks  
 Saad B. Seddik  
 Daniel J. Sedlis  
 Janice Segman  
 Mateo T. Segua  
 Ralph Seliger  
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 Anne C. Selwyn  
 Reasa L. Semper  
 Norberto Serrano  
 Oscar Serrano  
 Robert W. Serrao  
 Andrew Sessa  
 Navin K. Shah  
 Wayne Shapiro  
 Deepak K. Sharma

Anne Shatz Benlisa  
 Valerie M. Sheafe  
 Mushiq H. Shema  
 Sharon Shepard  
 Lenore N. Sherman  
 Wilma K. Shiffman  
 Sandra S. Sieberry  
 Gloria O. Siebs  
 Richard A. Siegel  
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 April D. Silva  
 Howard P. Silver  
 Sheila Silver  
 Ann B. Silver  
 Robert M. Silver  
 David L. Silverman  
 Susan Silvestro  
 Dorothy I. Siminski  
 Ruth Simmons  
 Adele L. Simpson  
 Ina E. Sinclair  
 Taracharran Singh  
 Edward H. Sisenwein  
 Othello Skeete  
 Dorothy Skelin  
 Robert H. Sklar  
 Catherine R. Slade  
 Darlene Slater  
 Valma A. Small  
 Allen F. Smalls  
 William J. Smarrito  
 Elaine A. Smith  
 Rebekah A. Smith  
 Robert J. Smith  
 Overta Smith  
 John T. Smith  
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 Harold J. Smith  
 Anaphine M. Smith-Cardin  
 Anthony Smolenski  
 Carlton A. Snaith  
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 Gaye F. Snyder-Inkeles  
 Georgette Soliman  
 Musbau Salola  
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 Bruce Solomon  
 Maureen L. Somma  
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 Christine Spencer  
 Claudia I. Spielman  
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 Janette M. Springle  
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 Adrienne Staley  
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 Roschel Hilland Stearns  
 Darryl S. Steckler  
 Julian A. Stein  
 Ava N. Sterling  
 Edythe Sternberg  
 Sandra D. Stevens  
 Margaret Stofa  
 James C. Story  
 Phyllis Stothers  
 Brenda Y. Stoute  
 Sallie M. Stroman  
 Kathleen A. Sturgis  
 Catherine Sturm  
 Frances D. Suddreith-Hart  
 Margaret A. Suite  
 Apinya Sukpanichnant  
 Mortimer Sullivan  
 Deborah Sumlin  
 Bharrat Surujnarine  
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 Andrew Sutton  
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 Thomas V. Tallarico  
 Alfredo L. Tan  
 Russ Taormina  
 Vernon Tappin  
 Nelva E. Taub  
 Richard J. Taub  
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 Brenda Taylor  
 Marian W. Taylor  
 Deborah Taylor  
 Timothy Taylor  
 Madeline Taylor  
 Kirst D. Taylor  
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 Stuart A. Tepper  
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 Bridget Thomas  
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 Brant C. Thomas  
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 Christine E. Thompson  
 Sonia V. Thompson

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 Harriet Throver  
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 Stephen Tisdale  
 Nicholas Titakis  
 Alice A. Todd  
 Winston Todman  
 Joel E. Tolchinsky  
 Vivienne Tolin  
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 Patricia Tucker  
 James Turkel  
 Elaine Turkal  
 Emma Turner  
 Larcine A. Tursi  
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 Elouise Tyson  
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 Lorella J. Valencia  
 Josephine Valentin  
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 Marjorie A. Valleau  
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 Myrna Van Peltten  
 Francis P. Vard  
 Edwin Vargas  
 Nelly Varnyan  
 George P. Varughese  
 Alan Vengersky  
 Aniel Vento  
 Edelmira Ventura  
 Ruth Verbit  
 Eliseo Vergara Jr.  
 Adelaide Verponi  
 Doreen Viale  
 Leonor A. Vilar  
 Sarah R. Vilar  
 Gregory Vilchitski

Narciso R. Villafuerte  
 Robert J. Villiers  
 Michael J. Vincent  
 Rev. Edgar J. Vines  
 Ana T. Vives  
 Jacob N. Vogel  
 Sally Rotofsky Waldman  
 Jay Wallia  
 Ellen Walk  
 Perry R. Walker  
 Linda Walker  
 Karmelita L. Walker  
 Dorothy Wallace  
 Joyce A. Wallace  
 Thomas M. Walsh  
 Rita P. Walsh  
 Thomas J. Walsh  
 Joy M. Walton  
 Donald Walton  
 Arlinda Walton  
 Carolyn Walton  
 Joan Wan  
 Yih-Lu Charlie Wang  
 Elise V. Ward  
 Mary Virginia Ward  
 Joseph P. Warfield  
 Ellen R. Warmstein  
 John P. Warner  
 Jay W. Warshofsky  
 Catherine Washington  
 Barry A. Washington  
 Ava Washington  
 Gregory C. Washington  
 Lorraine D. Washington  
 Victoria J. Washington  
 Barbara Washington-Griles  
 Herbert Wasserman  
 Jacquelyn D. Watson  
 Howard J. Wattenberg  
 Nora Fran Weaver  
 Joana H. Weber  
 Saul Weber  
 Edmund J. Weinblatt  
 Ruth C. Weiner  
 Stuart Weinstein  
 Olga R. Weiss  
 Regine C. Weiss  
 James F. Welby  
 Kevin Welch  
 Erich J. Werner  
 Kenneth Wesley  
 Ronald N. West  
 Anthony Weston  
 Jeffrey Wheeler  
 Doris D. White  
 Joseph J. White  
 Terry M. White  
 Joyce S. White

Grace White  
 Theodore R. White  
 Rose Mary Whitehead  
 Stephen J. Whyte  
 Shirley Ann Wiggins  
 Ferdinand Wight  
 Sarah J. Willborne  
 Ronald S. Willig  
 Laraine C. Williams  
 Yvonne C. Williams  
 Audrey Williams  
 Lucindy Williams  
 Darrell A. Williams  
 Jacqueline L. Williams  
 Lyndon H. Williams  
 Herbert Williams  
 Amos Williams  
 Jacqueline Y. Williams  
 Isza Williams-Darlington  
 Margaret E. Williams-McClammy  
 Diane Williams  
 Aaron Wilne  
 Ronald T. Wilson  
 Lorraine Wilson  
 Kay A. Wilson Bigelow  
 Marva Wilson-Games  
 Gary R. Wink  
 Rita L. Winston  
 Douglas G. Winston  
 Antoinette Witherspoon  
 Eric Wollman  
 Spencer L. Wong  
 Nga F. Wong  
 Bassanio Wong  
 Peter Wood  
 Janine M. Woodley-Brown  
 Judith Woods  
 Noel R. Worrell  
 Selma R. Wright  
 Peggy C. Wright  
 Benjamin Wright, Jr.  
 Peggy A. Wright-Noldon  
 Annette J. Wyre  
 Russel Yates  
 David Yerushalmi  
 Carol F. Yost  
 Linda Young  
 Anita B. Yurman-King  
 Robert T. Zappala  
 Elsie Zayas  
 Leoila M. Zeigler  
 Antoinette E. Zeitoun  
 Arthur Ziccardi  
 Margie D. Zinzi  
 David M. Zirman  
 Phyllis M. Zito  
 Jeffrey I. Zuckerman

## Ranked Choice Voting Comes To New York City This Year

Starting in 2021, New York City will use Ranked Choice Voting in primary and special elections for local offices. The first Ranked Choice Voting election will be on February 2, 2021 in a special election for NYC Council District 24 (Queens). NYC will use Ranked Choice Voting in other special elections and, then, in primary elections in June for Mayor, Public Advocate, Comptroller, Borough President and City Council.

New Yorkers elected to use Ranked Choice Voting in a 2019 ballot measure. It passed with 73.5% support.

How will you fill out your ballot? You will rank up to 5 candidates in order of preference. An example of a correctly marked ballot appears in this story. In the example, Candidate A through E appears in rows and 1 through 5 appears in columns. Ovals are marked as follows: Candidate B is ranked 1, Candidate C is ranked 2, Candidate A is ranked 3, Candidate E is ranked 4, and D is ranked 5.

You pick your first-choice candidate and completely fill in the oval next to their name under the 1st column. If you have a second-choice candidate, fill in the oval next to their name under the 2nd column. You can rank up to 5 candidates (even if there are more than 5 candidates). You can still choose to vote for only one candidate if you prefer. Ranking other candidates does not harm your first choice.

Do not rank a candidate more than once. If you do, only your top ranking for them will count. Do not give multiple candidates the same ranking. If you choose more than one candidate as your first choice, your ballot will not be valid.

The Board of Elections will tally votes. If a candidate gets more than 50% of the first-choice vote, that candidate wins. But if no candidate gets more than 50%, the candidate with the least

number of first-choice votes is eliminated, and everyone who voted for that last-place candidate will have their second-choice voices tallied and redistributed among the other candidates. If a

candidate gets more than 50% in the round 2 vote, s/he wins. If no candidate gets more than 50%, the process starts again, until there's one candidate with more than 50% of the first- and second-choice vote. The Board of Elections calls this a "process of elimination" until there is a winner.

	1	2	3	4	5
CANDIDATE A	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
CANDIDATE B	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
CANDIDATE C	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
CANDIDATE D	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
CANDIDATE E	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

# ORGANIZATION OF STAFF ANALYSTS' RETIREES CLUB MEMBERS FOR 2020/21

We are not soliciting dues for the calendar year 2021 due to the impact of the COVID pandemic on OSARC activities. However, a contribution form is included with this edition of the Newsletter. You are free to make a donation if you wish but the Newsletter will go out digitally to anyone we have a personal email for.

Anyone listed here was either a dues payer for 2020 or has paid for 2021 or both.

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 Dolly I. Adams  
 Sallie W. Adams  
 Risikatu Adebajo-Kassim  
 Mark F. Adler  
 Gerardo V. Afable  
 Lazarus Agrapides  
 Prakash Ailawadi  
 Timothy G Alapo  
 Yolanda Alayon  
 Michaela C Albanese- Finkelstein  
 Thomas Albano  
 Frederick C. Alexander  
 Lorraine Alexander  
 George Alexander  
 Angela Alexander-Wilson  
 Anthony Alfano  
 Albida K. Ali  
 Tristana Allas  
 Christine Allen  
 Sybil M. Allen  
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 Natividad R. Alvarez  
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