

August-  
September  
2004  
Vol. 12 No.6/7

# OSARC newsletter

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For OSARC



### OSARC

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Photo: Rob Spencer

## UNION OFFICE K.O.'D BY FLOOD – OSARC RELOCATES

**W**ith the OSA union office substantially out of commission from the catastrophic flood of August 15<sup>th</sup>, OSARC moved its September meeting to one of the community rooms at the East Midtown Plaza apartment complex between 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenues – on a day that started with heavy rains and transit delays. Nonetheless, nearly thirty brave souls turned out for the first meeting of the fall.

As you can see in the photograph above, taken in early September, the OSA office is (to say the least) a mess. Reconstruction will take some time. As a result, the October meeting, and meetings for the remainder of the year, will be relocated to the East Midtown Plaza complex's Community Room "D," located in the building at 333 East 23<sup>rd</sup> Street. To reach the meeting location, walk east on 23<sup>rd</sup> Street toward First Avenue. Halfway between Second and First Avenue, on the north side of 23<sup>rd</sup> Street, enter the plaza between the dry cleaners and restaurant, then make a sharp right turn to the community room. Signs will be posted. The October meeting will feature a guest speaker from the American Red Cross on *How to Be Prepared For Any Kind of Emergency*. Considering the flood, it's a pity we didn't have the speaker in earlier.

### Next Organization of Staff Analysts Retirees Club Meeting

**Wednesday • October 13, 2004 • 12:30–2:30 pm**

**New Location • East Midtown Plaza Community Room "D"**

333 East 23<sup>rd</sup> Street (Walk east on the north side of 23<sup>rd</sup> Street toward First Ave. Enter the plaza between the cleaners and restaurant then make a right turn.)

**Guest Speaker From the American Red Cross on  
"How to be Prepared for any Kind of Emergency"**

## OSARC Officers 2004-2005

Co-Chair.....	Mary Hillman
Co-Chair.....	Allan Rose
Co-Vice-Chair.....	Trudy Stone
Co-Vice-Chair.....	Sallie Stroman
Co-Vice-Chair.....	Ana T. Vives
Treasurer.....	Louis Starkey
Secretary.....	Barbara Jones

  
 Newsletter Editor.....Rob Spencer  
 Photographs...Jean Anmuth

Maxwell, James McKeon, Carol Michaels & guest, Dan Morgan, T. Rasul Murray, Erwin Nied, Sheldon Oliff, Sadye Olivieri, John Ost, Carol Payne, Antony Penel, Robert Pfefferman, William Pfister, Phyllis Pomerantz, Evelyn Marie Pridgen & two guests, Risa Puld, Frederick Ranzoni, Raymond Riccio, Edna Riley, Stacy Rindler, Allan Rose, Cheryl Samuels, Sylvia Sands and guest, Peter Schweitzer, Michael Spector, Louis Starkey, Betty Stewart, Trumilla Stone, Sallie Stroman, Mary Taylor, Hattie Thomas, Ana Vives and guest, Nona Volk, Michael Walsh and guest, Herbert Wasserman, Sarah Wilborne and guest, Margaret Williams and guest, Alice Yap.

We hope to see **you** at our next meeting.

## We'll Be Seeing You in All the Old Familiar Places

A total of twenty-six (26) members and friends attended the September OSARC meeting:

Jean Anmuth, Renee Bash, Elizabeth Borden, Ida Chin, Richard Fink, Beverly Freierman, Manny Friedman, Tom Gorse, Ben Heller, Betty Henderson, Paul Henry, Mary Hillman, Barbara Jones, Roslyn Jones, Kaye Lee, Rosanne Levitt, Hank Mandel, T.Rasul Murray, John Ost, Edna Riley, Allan Rose, Louis Starkey, Sallie Stroman, Ana Vives, Richard Walters, and Margaret Williams.



OSARC Treasurer Louis Starkey, Co-Chair Allan Rose, Ida Chin help set up the September meeting luncheon.

A total of ninety (90) members and friends attended the June OSARC luncheon:

Hakimah Al-Zahra, Alice Allen, Leslie Allen, Jean Anmuth, Ingrid Balady, Chuck Baroo, Renee Bash, Jewel Bachrach, Vidyadhar Bhide, Elizabeth Borden, Yvonne Broughton, Patricia Burton, Johnsie Cheatham, Ida Chin, Joyce Cleary & husband Jim and son Stephen (back from Iraq), Glynton Coleman, Elizabeth D'Aversa & guest, Vincent DiGesù, Richard Fink, Manny Friedman, Myra Goralski & guest, Tom Gorse, Stanley Granat, Richard Guarino, Gussie Harris & guest, Betty Henderson, Mary Hillman, Carolyn Hubbard & guest, Barbara Jones, Roslyn Jones, Ben Heller, Roberta Kolin, Irving Kreindler, Jane Kronholtz, Richard Kucera, Joel Leichter, Rosanne Levitt, Nilsa Mangual, Letitia

## Sing Along: Oh Medicare, My Medicare

Tune: Oh Tanenbaum Words: Sol Abrams

*We reprint the following contemporary adaptation of the Christmas classic as we move toward election day. Universal healthcare for all. What a pleasant thought!*

Oh Medicare, my Medicare  
 With all those plans, are you still there?  
 Can I stay indestructible,  
 With a higher deductible?  
 So Congress please, go very slow,  
 Don't make me join an HMO.  
 You've given me an awful scare,  
 Don't privatize my Medicare.

Oh Medicare, I'm so afraid,  
 You'll force me on to Medicaid.  
 You'll sell my house from under me,  
 So you can pay my surgeon's fee.  
 If there's no money in the till,  
 How will you pay my hospital bill?  
 And I will have no clothes to wear,  
 They will be sold by Medicare.

Oh Medicare, my Medicare,  
 Why don't you pay for Long Term Care?  
 Insurance premiums are insane,  
 My nest egg's going down the drain.  
 The rotunda of the Capitol Dome,  
 Will soon become my permanent home.  
 The Congressmen will see me there,  
 My misery I'll make them share.

Oh Medicare, my brand new plan,  
 Was not imported from Japan,  
 It was made in the U.S.A.  
 With few deductions from take home pay.  
 It covers you, it covers me.  
 Yes everyone in our country  
 For each of us all costs to share,  
***Put everyone on Medicare!***

## COMRO Report

John Ost, one of three OSARC representatives to COMRO (the Committee of Municipal Retiree Organizations) reported on the September COMRO meeting:



Edna Riley, Mary Hillman, and Rasul Murray serve up the grub at the September OSARC meeting.

Larry Kaplan, former COMRO chairperson, recommended that people read the book, *Running on Empty* by Peter Peterson, a former head of the Federal Reserve. Peterson blames both the Republican and Democratic parties for failing our country by running huge budget deficits. Ost said he hoped to persuade Kaplan, who is extremely knowledgeable about economic issues, to address OSARC in the future.

Ost distributed a booklet describing the new Medicare-approved drug discount cards which became available in May of 2004 as part of the Bush Administration's Medicare "reform" bill of late 2003. OSARC members interested in obtaining a copy of the *Guide to Choosing a Medicare-Approved Drug Discount Card* should call 1-800-MEDICARE or visit the Publications section of the Medicare website [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov). The cards are an interim measure for the period until 2006, when the Medicare prescription drug benefit is implemented.

Ost mentioned that a 13 minute video hosted by veteran news anchor Walter Cronkite, *Navigating the New Medicare Rx Law*, is available without cost from the AFL-CIO affiliated Alliance for Retired Americans. To obtain a copy, contact Patti Riley at (202) 974-8271.

The 13 minute video was produced by Families USA as part of *The Medicare Road Show*, a public information campaign to educate seniors across the country about the new Medicare prescription drug law.

You can also view the video online and download print materials from the Families USA website at [www.familiesusa.org](http://www.familiesusa.org).

Stuart Liebowitz, the head of the DC37 retirees organization reported that Social Security is basically sound and that there are measures that could be taken that would make Social Security secure indefinitely. One major step would be to eliminate the cap on income subject to FICA taxes. Presently, workers pay FICA taxes on only the first \$87,900 they earn a year. With the cap off, CEO's and highly compensated workers would pay into the system on all their earnings. [For a related story, see "*Bush and Greenspan Revive Phony Social Security Crisis*" on this page.]

Liebowitz reported that DC37's focus this year on retiree issues will be to secure reimbursement for spousal health insurance, even after a member passes away.

## NYS Attorney General Sets Up Drug Price Website

New York State Attorney General Eliot Spitzer's office has established a new website to help those without prescription drug coverage find the lowest price for prescription drugs. The site, [www.nyagrx.org](http://www.nyagrx.org) provides prices for the 25 most commonly prescribed prescription drugs at certain pharmacies in various counties across the state as surveyed by the AG's office. After choosing to search by city and county or zipcode and distance, you simply choose the drug name from a drop down box and a list of pharmacies that meet your criteria is displayed, along with the price they charge for the drug you selected.

Those without access to the internet may call the office of the Attorney General's Health Care Helpline (1-800-771-7755 op. #3) whose staff can walk you through the process or mail you information.

Some additional hints from the AG's office: shop around because prices may vary widely, ask for a pharmacy's price list (a print out they must provide of the 150 most commonly prescribed drugs), and ask the pharmacist to match or beat a lower price from a nearby competitor.

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## Bush and Greenspan Revive Phony Social Security "Crisis"

In June 2004, the Congressional Budget Office released an analysis of Social Security which showed it to be fully solvent through 2053, nearly fifty years from now – without any changes in the program at all.

Dean Baker, co-director of the Center for Economic and Policy Research, notes that "This means Social Security is far sounder today than it has been through most of its existence. In the



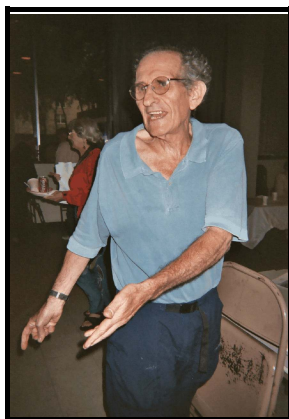
Richard Walters, Paul Henry, Renee Bash and Rosanne Levitt help set up the September meeting.

past, shortfalls in every decade from the forties through the eighties required frequent tax increases, with the last series of increases ending in 1990."

The CBO report is more optimistic than the report of the Social Security trustees issued in March 2004 which, nonetheless, projected full benefits payable until 2042, nearly four decades from now.

Why is the CBO more optimistic? It makes an assumption that the long term unemployment rate will be a bit lower than the trustees do and that productivity growth will be closer to long-term averages. The trustees assume long term productivity growth of 1.6% per year or about the 1.5% rate during the period 1973-1995. The CBO assumes an average rate of productivity growth of 1.9% per year, closer to the 2.5% average productivity growth over the





Manny Friedman at the September meeting.

period 1947-2003, the entire period for which comparative data is available. More rapid productivity growth would mean more rapid wage growth and more rapid growth in Social Security revenue.

The CBO report spotlights longevity and not baby boomer retirement as a concern, since the youngest baby boomer would be 89 at the date CBO projects depletion of the funds. Baker says "The CBO report should help counter concerns that Social Security faces any sort of crisis."

Nonetheless, as the Republican Party gathered for its nominating convention in late August, Federal Reserve Chair Alan Greenspan repeated a warning he had made to Congress back in February that Social Security might not be able to pay baby boomers their benefits at current rates. Greenspan again pushed the Bush administration position that the solution to this phony "crisis" is private accounts for younger workers.

And, at the Republican National Convention, Bush repeated his call to privatize the program in part.

The AFL-CIO affiliated Alliance for Retired Americans noted "Polls show a vast majority of Americans support the existing Social Security program and want to see it strengthened to cover future generations. But the president's proposal to invest Social Security taxes into the stock market is a risky and expensive venture that few Americans fully understand. Estimates of the cost for the Bush plan to convert Social Security into personal investment accounts are pegged in the trillions of dollars. And with a record federal deficit, mounting costs associated with the Iraq War, and revenue losses from tax cuts, Bush may be hard pressed to find the money to complete his privatization plans."

But what if you look at the question slightly differently and assume the tax cuts, deficit creation and shift in spending from social programs to the military is a plan? In the September 1-7 *Village Voice*, James Ridgeway, while referring to the private accounts scheme as "Wall Street's wet dream, allowing each person paying into Social Security an option of investing part of his or her stash in private securities" points out that "Greenspan and Bush are engaged in a policy to reduce government revenue through tax cuts in such a way that it puts more and more pressure on the currently viable Social Security system until it eventually does crumble and collapse." And *that* would appear to be Bush's agenda.



7<sup>th</sup> Avenue fashionistas have nothing on OSARC Sec'y Barbara Jones.

## Join a "Million Workers" Marching On Washington October 17<sup>th</sup>

On October 17, a hundred thousand working men and women are expected to travel to Washington DC for the "Million Worker March" at the Lincoln Memorial.

Organized and supported by a range of unions across the country led by the West Coast-based International Longshore and Warehouse Union's Longshore Division, the march is an attempt to place working people's issues squarely on the nation agenda. The call for the March says:

*In our name, a handful of the rich – and powerful corporations – have usurped our government.*

*A corporate and banking oligarchy changes hats and occupies public office to wage class war on working people. They have captured the State in their own interests. The vast majority of working Americans are under siege. Social services and essential funding for schools, libraries, affordable housing and health care are slashed and eliminated. Decent paying jobs are disappearing through outsourcing and privatization whose real purpose is to break unions and roll back the gains of one hundred years of struggle... The time has come to mobilize working people for our own agenda. Let us end subservience to the power of the privileged few and their monopoly of the political process in America.*

Endorsing the march are numerous unions including The National Education Association, AFSCME District Council 1707, the American Postal Workers Union, Transport Workers Union Local 100, and the San Francisco Labor Council, among others.

The goals sought by the Marchers include:

- Universal single-payer health care
- A national living wage that lifts people permanently out of poverty
- Protection and enhancement of Social Security immune to privatization
- Guaranteed pensions that sustain a decent life for all working people.
- The cancellation of all corporate "free" trade agreements, including NAFTA, MAI and FTAA.
- An end to privatization, contracting out, deregulation and the pitting of workers against each other across national boundaries in a mad race to the bottom.
- For workers' right to organize and for a repeal of Taft Hartley and all anti-labor legislation.
- Funding public education in a crash program to restore our decaying and abandoned schools with state of the art school facilities in every community.
- Rebuilding our decaying inner cities with clean, modern and affordable housing and eliminating homelessness in America with guaranteed housing and jobs for all.
- Progressive taxation that increases taxation on corporations and the rich while providing relief for the working class and poor.
- An end to the poisoning of the atmosphere, soil, water and food supply with a national emergency program to restore the environment, end global warming and preserve our endangered eco-system.

For more information about the march and to locate buses and rides to the march in your area, visit [www.millionworkermarch.org](http://www.millionworkermarch.org) or call Teamsters Local 808 in Long Island City at 718-389-1900x21 or AFSCME DC1707 in Manhattan at 212-219-0022ext 5185.



## Long Strange Trip, Part II?

In the fall of 2003, members received a survey of potential interest in various destinations for day trips and overnight excursions. The responses were published in the March 2004 *OSARC Newsletter*.

At the September OSARC meeting, Co-Chair Mary Hillman asked for members to join the Trip Planning Committee. Richard Fink, Renee Bash, and Betty Henderson volunteered, joining previous members Trudy Stone and Barbara Hunt (who were not in attendance).

The group intends to schedule as many trips as they are able to plan and for which there is interest.

Previously, OSARC members had expressed interest in visiting the Hayden Planetarium this fall. Since an informal survey of members attending the September meeting showed only three members interested in attending, it was decided that discussion of the trip would be postponed until a future OSARC meeting.

On a related note, member T. Rasul Murray mentioned that the Downtown Alliance is offering a free 90 minute guided Wall Street walking tour. The Alliance says the tour weaves "together history, events, architecture and people of Downtown – the birthplace of New York, the financial



Beverly Freierman, Roslyn Jones, Richard Fink, Tom Gorse and Hank Mandel.

capital of the world, and the hottest new neighborhood in the city. Stops include the U.S. Custom House, Trinity Church, Wall Street, the New York Stock Exchange and other architectural and cultural sites." The tour is offered every Thursday and Saturday at noon, rain or shine. The tour meets at the front steps of the US Custom House, One Bowling Green. Reservations are not required for individuals, but are required for groups. For more details call (212) 606-4064.

Finally, for those looking for more senior travel options outside of OSARC, we bring to your attention Grand Circle Travel, originally an offshoot of AARP, and Elderhostel, a non-profit organization serving those 55 and over with 10,000 travel and educational programs annually, three quarters of them in the United States. Both specialize in serving seniors.

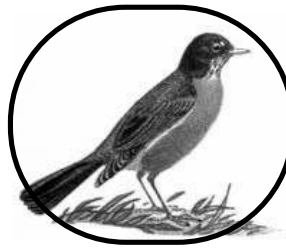
For more information on Grand Circle Travel's tours call (800) 221-2610 or visit [www.gct.com](http://www.gct.com). For information on Elderhostel's options visit [www.elderhostel.org](http://www.elderhostel.org) or call (877) 426-8056.



Margaret Williams

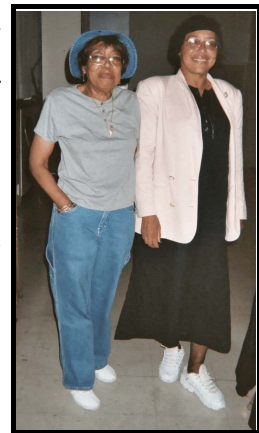
## Round Robin

**Mary Hillman** went to New Orleans. Bourbon Street was fantastic. She enjoyed herself tremendously and recommends the trip to anyone. **Alan Rose** did not go on any trips but spent time at a friend's house in the Rockaways.



It was nice to get away, he said. It doesn't feel as if you are in the City when you are there. **Manny Friedman's** granddaughter – who is 16 – visited over the summer. He attended the anti-Bush demonstrations and observed that there were barriers on every side, penning demonstrators in. With so many police, you feel, he said, that you are not free. It was depressing. **Rosanne Levitt** also attended a demonstration against Bush and marched with the Sierra Club; it took a lot of stamina. She started voice lessons during the summer. **Renee Bash** has the same voice teacher as Rosanne and noted that their lessons are "back to back." They are performing duets. She observed that if there is a talent show this year, they may get to sing for OSARCers. She did not take any big trips and finally bought a computer [a Mac] and started lessons. **Paul Henry** and his wife went on a camping trip through state parks in Pennsylvania. He said the bad part was having to travel on Route 80 where you get a mouth full of smog. Most state parks in Pennsylvania do not allow dogs because there are bears around and bears love to eat dogs. **Richard Walters** had an "uneventful" summer.

**Richard Fink** went to Boston for a weekend when the Hyatt chain offered a ridiculously low discount of almost 50% to seniors 62 and older. **Elizabeth Borden** has been taking care of her aunt. She read a poem on the theme *How To Know You Are Getting Older*: "Everything hurts and what doesn't hurt, doesn't work. You feel like the morning after, and you haven't been anywhere. You join a health club and don't go. You need your glasses to find your glasses. Your back goes out more than you do. Your knees buckle, but your belt won't. Your mind makes contracts your body can't meet. Dialing long distance wears you out. Your children begin to look middle aged. The gleam in your eye is from the sun hitting your bifocals. You look forward to a dull evening. You know all the answers but nobody asks you the question. You have too much room in the house but not enough in the medicine cabinet. You stop looking forward to your next birthday, but you are glad when it arrives." **Rasul Murray** made two trips this summer – one to the Smokey Mountains in Tennessee, the other to Maine, where he has family including his mother and brother. Through the wonders of cyberspace he was able to answer questions about his participation in the Civil Rights movement posed by questionnaires from two high school students, one from Colorado and a Ghanaian



Elizabeth Borden, Kaye Lee





Kaye Lee and Ben Heller

Londoner. **Kaye Lee** was a delegate to the NAACP convention in early July and attended the convention of the Progressive National Baptist Convention in Houston, Texas. To relax she went to the country club in New Rochelle. **Ben Heller** had a great summer. He avoided visiting the City Tombs by escaping arrest with the other 1800 people at the "police parade that was in front of my house. Watching the police parade around doing nothing on your money and wanting a raise, was really fun." **Beverly Freierman** reported her summer was a bit of a drag because of all of the rain. She did go camping – a nice trip that she will remember. **Betty Henderson** traveled to California at the beginning of the summer. The highlights were driving up the twisting roads, seeing the Conservatory, the Redwoods and the Monterey Bay Aquarium. The trip was fantastic. **Ida Chin** went camping in the woods. She and her husband stayed in a big log house – big enough for five people – very big for the two of them. They had it all to themselves and had a grand time. **Margaret Williams** went to a lot of baby showers. The highlight was an outdoor garden party for her daughter who is getting married on September 26th. They prayed for no rain and God was gracious because it did not rain until 6 pm, when the party was over. She's looking forward to the wedding. **Barbara Jones** had a quiet summer. She took some small trips and enjoyed the weather. **Ana Vives** went to Florida. It rained, but she enjoyed herself. **Sallie Stroman** had a wonderful summer, although it was not hot enough. She had wanted to go to the beach to show off her bathing suit.

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## It's the Economy, Stupid

A few recent revelations about the state of the U.S. economy:

"Layoffs occurred at the second-fastest rate on record during the first three years of the Bush Administration, a government report has found. In the government's latest survey of how frequently workers are permanently dismissed from their jobs, the layoff rate reached 8.7% of all adult jobholders, or 11.4 million men and women age 20 or older. That is nearly equal to the 9% rate for the 1981-3 period, which included the steepest contraction in the American economy since the Great Depression." (*NY Times*, 8/2/04)

"Jobs in lower-wage industries and regions are growing at a faster pace than higher-wage jobs, suggesting job growth is less potent for the economy because the majority of new work is not accompanied by fat paychecks...Nearly 14% of jobs added have been temporary workers, who typically are paid lower wages. Restaurant workers, who also usually are paid lower wages, have been added too. Higher paid computer jobs have been added at a snail's pace...Although

U.S. firms have added more than 1.4 million jobs in the last nine months, economists and politicians have questioned if workers are finding good, higher-paying jobs or if firms are creating lower-paying work that the jobless are desperately taking." (*USA Today*, 8/2/04)

"The ranks of the poor and those without health insurance grew in 2003 for the third straight year...Median household income rose at about the same rate as inflation last year after three years of relative declines, according to the report...The national poverty rate rose to 12.5% last year from 12.1% in 2002. After dropping rapidly in a long economic boom and a government war on poverty in the 1960's from more than 22% in 1960, the rate has changed relatively little over the last four decades. It was slightly



Beverly Freierman

higher in 2003 than in 1969...The number of uninsured Americans rose last year largely because fewer companies were providing health benefits to their workers than in the past, the Census Bureau reported. Almost 16% of people (45 million Americans) did not have health insurance last year, up from 14.2% in 2000." (*NY Times*, 8/27/04)

"The poverty rate in New York City was unchanged at 19 percent, far above the national rate, and the median household income in New York stood at \$39,937, a statistically insignificant decline from last year. The percentage of New Yorkers spending 35% or more of their household income on their mortgages increased 6 percentage points to more than 44% of survey respondents. The percentage of New Yorkers paying more than 35 percent of their income on rent also rose, to about 42% from 38.5%." (*NY Times*, 8/27/04)

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## Seniors See Red (Ink That Is)

A study by the think tank Dēmos released in late 2003 entitled *Borrowing to Make Ends Meet* documented a 53% average increase in self-reported household credit card debt in American households between 1989 and 2001, based on data from the Survey of Consumer Finances. Especially hard hit were seniors. The study revealed average self-reported credit card debt among indebted seniors over 65 years of age increased by 89% from 1992-2001 to \$4,041. Seniors 65-69 saw a 217% increase in average credit card debt. Among seniors with incomes under \$50,000 – 70% of seniors – *one in five families with credit card debt spends over 40% of their income on debt payments including mortgage debt.*

For those in the 55-64 age bracket, the average credit card indebted family spends 31% of its income on debt payments, a 10 percentage point increase from 1992-2001 and credit card debt of middle-to-low income families headed by individuals in this age bracket who have no health insurance rose 169% over the decade as compared to those with health insurance whose debt rose only 37%. Tamara

Draut, director of the economic opportunity program at Dēmos, quoted in an Associated Press story of July 6, 2004 said the reason was the “weakening of the three-legged stool that elders are supposed to rely on – Social Security, pensions and private savings.” For more information, you can download *Retiring in the Red: The Growth of Debt Among Older Americans* and other reports from [www.demos-usa.org](http://www.demos-usa.org). You can also reach them at 220 Fifth Ave, 5th Floor, New York, NY, 10001 (212) 633-1405.

## OSARCers Turn Out To Protest The Bush Agenda

OSARC members were among the contingent of OSA members, retirees and staffers who turned out September 1 to join a massive "Labor Day" rally outside the Republican National Convention. Tens of thousands of union members from across the City packed into seven blocks of Eighth Avenue to hear speeches by national and local labor leaders



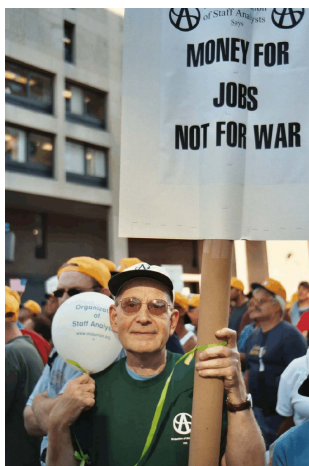
The common theme was opposition to the Bush Administration's anti-worker agenda, ranging from its theft of overtime pay, tax cuts for the wealthy, attacks on Medicare and Social Security to its failure to ensure healthcare for all Americans and its shift of resources



away from socially valuable programs such as affordable housing, education and healthcare to the war in Iraq. OSA's contingent was decked out in OSA hats and t-shirts and carried OSA balloons and signs opposing Bush administration policies.

Among OSARCers in the group were Richie Guarino, Lynn Bender, Nilsa Mangual, Sadye Olivieri and Allan Rose.

(Photos: Rob Spencer)



## OSARCers Solicit Donations For Two Worthy Causes

OSARC members T. Rasul Murray and Jean Anmuth are each active in supporting a charity and have “teamed up” to facilitate OSARC involvement in both.

**Books & Bucks For Ghana.** OSARCer and former HRA staffer T. Rasul Murray recently joined the board of the Digital Literacy Alliance, which has launched a “Books and Bucks” drive to furnish the Yaa Nyarkoa Library – and several schools in Agona Duakwa and nearby communities in the Central Region of Ghana, West Africa – with suitable reading material. OSARC has agreed to help the campaign by serving as a collection point for donations of books (not magazines) from any genre of literature, suitable for adults or children, including textbooks. In addition, If you are able, gifts of a dollar per donated book can be sent to the Digital Literacy Alliance, 333 Miller Road, P.O. Box 382, Getzville, NY 14068 att: Dr. Pharra DeWindt, Exec. Dir. For info about the Digital Literacy Alliance, visit [www.pharra.com](http://www.pharra.com).

Murray reports that the funds collected will be used to mail the books to Ghana. These tax deductible gifts can help make the dream of access to books for thousands of Ghanaian children and their parents a reality.

OSARCer Jean Anmuth has agreed to assist the project by receiving book donations at the OSA office. You must call her first to set up an appointment to drop books off.

**Clothing For Holy Apostles Soup Kitchen.** Jean also reports that Holy Apostles Soup Kitchen is in the process of establishing a clothes bank for homeless and needy New Yorkers. Especially needed are socks. If anyone has clothes to donate, please contact Jean at the union office. Please remember that all clothing should be cleaned and in good repair and must be dropped off at the union office. Because Jean will be hand-delivering the items to Holy Apostles, please be sure to pack them in a hand-holdable shopping bag. Jean asks that you “take pity on her” by keeping the bags of manageable weight, as she is “old and tired.”

*You can reach Jean to make an appointment to drop off clothes or books at (212) 686-1229 on Tuesday, Wednesday or Friday afternoons (2-5pm).*

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## City Pays Medicare Part B Premium

Those OSARCers in Medicare should have received a check from the city in mid-August for up to \$704 in reimbursement for Medicare Part B premiums. Checks went out to retirees and spouses aged 65 and older.

If you did not receive this payment and believe you are due the money, contact the City of NY Health Benefits Program, 40 Rector Street, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, NY NY 10006 (212)513-0470. Always be sure to include your name, address, telephone number, social security number, and pension number in your letter.

*Editor's Note: Creative contributions – poems, short stories, artwork, nonfiction articles – are welcome. Send them for consideration to OSARC Newsletter, Attn: Rob Spencer, 220 East 23<sup>rd</sup> Street, Suite 707, New York NY 10010.*



# New Gala Luncheon Site Is A Hit With OSARCers

OSARC's annual gala June luncheon was held for the first time this year at La Maganette Ristorante. Attended by 90 OSARC members and guests, the luncheon was a hit with OSARC members – as the comments below reveal. Addressing the crowd, Co-Chairs Mary Hillman and Allan Rose said:

Good afternoon. We're happy to see so many of you here for the Gala Luncheon. Thank you for coming. Allan and I and the other officers wish to express our thanks for your overwhelming expression of confidence in re-electing us for another term. This year has been a spurt of growth for OSARC, primarily due to the early retirement incentive in the fall of 2002, as well as a large number of us who have reached retirement age this past year. At the outset, we expressed a desire to run a more effective and efficient ship for the mutual benefit of our members. In addition, we started development of a travel program, which hopefully will hold the interest of current members and provide a new dimension that will attract new members. This idea still yearns for success. We request your participation in making this vision into a reality rather than have it remain a dream. As for today, we hope you are enjoying your lunch and we wish everybody a wonderful summer.



Jim McKeon, John Ost,  
Edna Riley

In a sort of mini "round robbin," OSARC activist Jean Anmuth polled a range of OSARCers in mid-summer for an assessment of the June luncheon and a report on their summer activities:

**Mary Hillman (retired 2000):** I thought the luncheon was great. Everybody had a good time. They were happy with our decision about this place. I went to New Orleans in July for

one week and spent most of my time in the French Quarter. I had a blast – music, food and people were all excellent. I gambled and everybody else



Chuck Baroo, Edna Riley, Jean Anmuth and Elizabeth Borden.

I was with won but, as usual, I lost.

**John Ost (retired 1996):** I thought the place was great. The food was excellent. The wine was great. In fact, I tried to help out by visiting as many tables as possible and assisting them in drinking their wine.

**Allan Rose (retired 2002):** I didn't go any place this summer, so the party was a highlight. My best news is that through Weight Watchers, I've lost 22½ pounds since April. I feel better about myself and have more vitality, but I *still* enjoyed *all* the food at the luncheon.

**Bob Pfefferman (retired 2000):** All I can say is that I had a lot of fun.

**Chuck Baroo (retired 1995):** One of the reasons I enjoy coming back home to the east coast is the OSARC luncheon, seeing old friends and meeting new ones and the opportunity to just be ourselves.

**Jean Anmuth (retired 1996):** I loved the luncheon also – the private room allowed great space to take photos – but who are the two people I missed? I only got 88 out of 90! Thanks to Rosanne Levitt for taking photos I could be in. Next year, same place, same wine?

**T. Rasul Murray (retired 2002):** I met more new friends than old friends and had a much better time than I had expected. I was one of the two people not photographed – it was because I was having such a good time. [Note: he was photographed. He just needed help in finding himself. Still looking for the missing 2! - Jean Anmuth]

**Myra Goralski (retired 2000):** I had a very nice time and actually met a new

friend. Now we do outside things together, like two tourists in the city.

**Sylvia Sands (retired 2002):** It was nice to see all of the "oldies but goodies." I even might come to a meeting some day.

**Ida Chin (retired 1994):** The place is good and spacious but the light was too dim. I had fun and I loved the luncheon, meeting friends and talking to people.

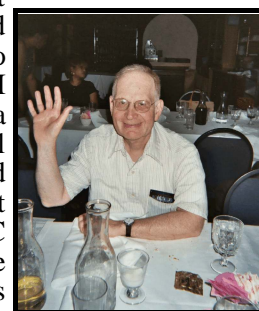
**Renee Bash (retired 1994):** You know, I can't remember the function. I do remember a very nice venue. I also remember a lot of booze; that may be why I can't remember the luncheon...

**Yvonne Broughton (retired 1992):** I thoroughly enjoyed the luncheon. The food was excellent, service was very good and I enjoyed seeing old friends 'cause I was seated with Mike Spector. He and I were co-workers. I'd enjoy OSARC having the luncheon there next year.

**Ben Heller (retired 1992):** It was excellent – it was great to see so many people. Had a lot of fun and missed all of those who weren't there. I think that Sheila and Bob and all our leaders should be cabinet members in DC and paid those enormous salaries 'cause they deserve it more.

**Richard Guarino (retired 1996):** This luncheon exemplifies the familial and collegial atmosphere that OSA strives to maintain. Bless us all!

**Edna Riley (retired 1992):** OSARC's great luncheon date, A cause celeb, again first rate, We talked and chattered, Concerning what – it didn't matter, Our "sole" intent to devour that which was plattered, That is if it didn't spatter, The food was 'licious, the service fine, An ode to the wine.



Allan Rose



**Irving Kreindler (retired 1991):** The luncheon was very nice. The food was very good. It was the first time we went to this place, which was very nice. I got a chance to see a number of old friends who seldom come to the meetings.

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## Another Walk With Chuck

Despite intense rain the day before – courtesy of leftover Hurricane Jeanne, four courageous OSARCers plus Chuck's friend Pat Heaphy took up

OSARCer Chuck Baroo's invitation for a guided tour of the joys and beauties of Van Cortlandt Park on September 29<sup>th</sup>. Mary Hillman, Allan Rose, Manny Friedman and Joan Doheny ended the hike with a lunch with Chuck and Pat. It was such a great trip that another trip has been planned.

**The second Chuck Baroo trip is a walk on City Island on Wednesday, October 27, 2004, starting promptly at 10am and concluding with lunch at Artie's Seafood restaurant around noon. Participants get a chance to stroll**

around a maritime neighborhood within New York City.

Take the #6 train to the last stop, Pelham Bay, then take the #29 bus to City Island. Get off at the first bus stop **after** the bridge to the island. We will meet there. Allow enough time to arrive by 10am. (Estimated travel time from midtown is 90+ minutes.) Limited enrollment. Call Jean Anmuth at the OSA office, (212) 686-1229 on Tuesday, Wednesday or Friday **afternoons** (2-5 pm) to register.

## Happy Birthday to OSA Retirees Born in September and October!

Mary Admore, Beverly Anderson, Aspacia Andros, Neil Awalt, Malkit Bains, Mary Barlow, Mirella Baroni-Harris, Renee Bash, Marcia Belgorod, Lynn Bender, Herman Berkowitz, Carolyn Berry, Vincent Berte, John Besignano, Andrew Bland, Carol Brown, Ronald Bruno, Kenneth Burton, Patricia Burton, Dorothy Byrd, John Byrne, Milton Campbell, Jose Luis Carrion, Louis Celi, Kuttikkattu Cherian, Marilyn Cironne, Josephine Clark, Harry Cliadakis, Martin Cohen, Sarah Colson, Ted Cox, Elizabeth D'Aversa, Prabhat Das, Rana Das, Ralph Delise, Vincent DiGesù, Audrey Doman, John Dunne, James Egan, Robert Eilets, Terrence Ellison, Barbara Elstein, Joseph Fanale, Camille Fatto, Gloria Faustino, Jeremiah Feehan, Carol Fernandez, Lee Filerman, Joan Fillot, Francine Finkel, Harold Fowler, Branda Fox, Rosalie Frost, Dianne Gaertner, Jesus Gagui, Joseph Giglio, Frank Glover, Myrna Gonzalez, Minette Gorelik, John Hannigan, Katherine Hansen, Cleve Hanson, Donald Hartnett, Sarah Hecht, Lisa Hernandez, Renee Herriott, Germaine Horace-Diamond, Carolyn Hubbard, Haydee Inclan, Pearl Jackson, Sheldon Jacobson, Ingrid Johnson, Charlie Johnson, Brenda Johnson, Betty Joseph, Phyllis Karasik, Betty Kenner, Kathleen Kinney, Marian Konstan, Beverly Krakower, Adele Kwaw, Kaye Lee, Roger Lew, Chien Sau Lu, Grace Lucas, Marvin Lutenberg, Janet Mahoney, Sheila Malloy, Lauren Malone, Henry Mandel, Clarissa Manjarrez, Lucretia Marcigliano, Sylvia Martinez Rivera, Tirso Martinez Jr, Constance Maxey, John Mazzarella, Lillian McBride, Gladys McCaine, Thomas McCarthy, Virginia McClam, Jannie McGill, Velma McLaughlin, Angelina Miller, Paul Milora, Jewell Monroe, Michael Murphy, Gabriel Neama, Erwin Nied, Yolanda Nixon, Jack Niznick, Sheldon Oliff, Maude Oliver, Jan Ostlund, Amorita Pakilit, John Pape, James Pappalardo, Elba Pelaez, Eileen Pentel, Sara Perry, Charles Pettignano, Anthony M. Pettolina, Mary Ellen Phifer, Susan Piccirillo, Arlene Pitt, Barbara Powell, Charles Procida, Morton Pupko, Edward Rasquin, Thomas Reed, Claus Reinisch, Dolores Rice, Arnaldo Rodriguez, Nils Roest, John Rose, Norman Roth, Philip Roth, Eileen Rupel, Robert Sacharski, Joyce Saffir, Joseph Sanchez, Joseph Schatz, Myrna Schindler, Michael SeJan, Naresh Shah, Hassan Sharif, Anita Shleifstein, Hedvah Shuchman, Elaine Silver, Dorothy Siminski, Milton Sirota, Sandra Smith, John Smith, Stewart Solomon, Glenn Stancroff, Roschel Holland Stearns, Sallie Stroman, Margaret Suite, James Svrcek, Tuly Tanenbaum, Daisy Thompson, Ephraim Veals, Margaret Vinson, David Vogt, Nancy Wallace-Bailey, Yih-Lu Charlie Wang, Ashley Webster, Olga Weiss, Henry Welby, Lois White, Laraine Williams, Yolanda Williams, Aaron Wilner, Eric Wolfeman, Patricia Woods, Benjamin Wright, Jr., Renee Zwerman.

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[Continued from Page 10]  
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