

# The NYPL Retirees Association

## NEWSLETTER

Volume 1, Number 2 December 1993

### Maintenance of Purchasing Power (MOPP)

by Belle Weinberg

Pensions are the only state expenditure not annually adjusted for inflation. Finally, on June 10, 1993, Senator Michael F. Nozzolio introduced the MOPP legislation, and it received a bill number, S.5878. Although similar legislation has been unsuccessful in past years, the Retired Public Employees Association (RPEA) believes the MOPP bill will be seen as fair to both the retiree and the taxpayer.

To win support for the bill, RPEA incorporated techniques that have been successful in other states. For one thing, the RPEA plan caps the rate of increase at \$20,000. If, for example, the legislation were approved and retirees were granted a four percent increase, those with higher pensions would get only as much as those earning \$20,000, a maximum increase of \$800 for that year.

In addition, retirees would absorb the first ten percent of inflation. That means if a person were getting a \$20,000 pension, and if inflation were three percent, then the adjustment would be \$540 instead of \$600.

*continued on page 2*

### Plea for NYPL Memorabilia

Robert Sink urged retirees to add material to the Library's archives when he spoke to the Association at its October 20 meeting. He is the Archivist/Records Manager in charge of the NYPL Archives. As samples of the archives, he showed slides of former staff members, branch libraries as they used to be, and old written documents. Mr. Sink would like photos, programs, anything relating to the Library. Staff members have often brought their cameras to retirement parties, exhibition openings, branch library dedications, and countless birthday parties, to name just a few. If you have taken motion pictures, he will reproduce the film on video tape to preserve it.

The written word is also important. In the archives, for example, is the daily diary kept by one of the workmen who helped construct the Central Building. If you have anything similar let Mr. Sink know. Or if you did not keep a diary, could you put into writing what happened in, let us say, the planning of the Donnell Library, or Lincoln Center, or Mid-Manhattan. They all had interesting histories, both pleasant and unpleasant, which are either unknown or forgotten today. The same could be said for the opening of new branch libraries, the beginning of new services, the reorganization of the Library's administrative structures,

*continued on page 2*

### The Pension Supplement

The 1992-1993 State Legislature passed S.2742 which continues the pension supplement for people who retired prior to January 1, 1983. No adjustment was made for inflation. The amount of the supplement therefore remains the same. Retirees had also requested that the supplement be extended to those who retired in 1983 through 1987, but the legislature did not do this. Although any additional money is helpful, the supplement has never been equivalent to a cost of living adjustment, and the amount of money has usually been small.

#### HOLIDAY PARTY

Monday, December 13th  
(note change from December 15)

6:30 p.m.

Maison Japonaise

125 East 39th Street (between  
Lexington and Park)

Dutch Treat

For reservations call Juanita Doares  
212 666-5737, or Rosemary  
O'Leary 212 255-9168.

At 4:30 p.m. prior to the dinner the Health Committee will hold an open meeting on the Clinton health care plan, staff room, 6th floor, Mid-Manhattan Library. All members are invited.

## NYPL Archives

*continued from page 1*

and so on. Perhaps you could also write down your experiences in the Library, such as encounters with readers, anecdotes about staff members, and so on. Certainly the Library has had many unusual stories to tell about its readers, both famous and not so much so. At one time various parts of the Library have kept card files on everything from interesting questions received to reading habits of readers.

Also needed are retirees who can identify people in the photos already in the archives. The value is increased if you can go beyond recognition and tell something about whoever is in the picture. Please send material to:

Robert E. Sink  
Archivist/Records Manager  
The NYPL Archives  
521 West 43rd Street  
New York, New York 10036  
telephone: 212 714-8572

## Mopp Bill

*continued from page 1*

The MOPP bill's greatest appeal to the Legislature probably lies in its estimated \$78 million operational cost. The cost of a similar bill, introduced by Assemblywoman Helene Weinstein, is estimated at \$4.8 billion. The Weinstein bill would include teachers' retirement and New York City's five retirement programs. The MOPP bill as introduced does not.

The MOPP bill was submitted to the Ways and Means Committee to determine its fiscal implications for state and local governments. The Committee came up with a cost figure of \$2.5 billion due to some technical

interpretation of the language. As of November 13, 1993, the bill has been amended, clarifying the language that led to the incorrect interpretation and also changing it to an omnibus bill which includes the possibility of the teachers and the New York City retirement programs being included. It is believed that an omnibus bill stands a better chance of acceptance.

The amended bill will be resubmitted to the Ways and Means Committee and introduced in the Assembly by Assemblyman John J. McEneny. The estimated cost of the omnibus bill is \$200 million as opposed to the Weinstein bill estimated at \$4.8 billion.

When MOPP is finally introduced in both houses of the Legislature, there will be much that we will all be called upon to do in order to move the legislation through the system and insure a successful outcome. Expect to hear from us, and we will expect to hear from you in return.

## Albany's Financing of Pensions Illegal

The Court of Appeals has ruled unanimously that Gov. Cuomo and the Legislature acted illegally in changing the way the state's pension system is financed. The State may now owe the fund as much as \$1.5 billion, and local governments may owe another \$1.5 billion. The change had permitted employer contributions to cover only current operating costs of the pensions system, rather than the estimated cost of paying pensions for all employees in the future. Both H. Carl McCall, the state comptroller, and his predecessor, Edward V. Regan opposed the change. Joseph McDermott, president of the Civil Service Employees Association, the largest union of state workers, said the

ruling "makes it clear once again that the retirement system cannot be used as a political slush fund." [condensed from a longer article in *The New York Times*, November 17, 1993]

## Federal Library Legislation

Funding for the following items is still in danger, although efforts to cut them from the budget have so far been thwarted, thanks to extensive lobbying:

- ♦ HEA II-A, College Library Technology and Cooperation
- ♦ HEA II-B, Library Education and Human Resource Development
- ♦ HEA II-B, Library Research and Demonstrations
- ♦ HEA II-C, Improving Access to Research Library Resources
- ♦ HEA VI, Library Literacy Programs
- ♦ LSCA II, Public Library Construction and Technology Enhancement

Total amount is \$44,541,000. ALA's Washington Office asks people to contact House and Senate members to urge them to reject any further attempts to eliminate the Higher Education Act and Library Services and Construction Act program funding for FY 1994 (which began October 1).

## Renewal of Membership

*See page 8*

## Election of Officers

*See page 7*

## NYPL and the State Budget

**Rick Lepkowski**, Associate Manager of the Library's Office of Governmental Affairs and Program, has been requesting that letters be written to Governor Cuomo urging increased funds for libraries. The Research Libraries of NYPL received significant cuts in State funding, including cuts of \$82,087 in "undesignated aid" and \$7,165 in funds for Schomburg. Because of cuts, all the special collections in the Central Research Library are still closed on Mondays. Also reduced were funds for the Andrew Heiskell Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, as well as funding to purchase books in the Central Branch Libraries. An increase of \$15 million in State funding is being requested for libraries across the state. The address is: Honorable Mario M. Cuomo Governor New York State Capitol Building Executive Chamber Albany, NY 12224 [letter from Lepkowski to Legislative Relations Committee Members, October 29, 1993]

## Health Plans

The Health Committee is writing a position paper on health plans and will present it at a future meeting of the association, after which we will publish it in this newsletter. At present the committee favors a single payment plan. It nevertheless backs the Clinton plan, recognizing that it has gaps which can be filled during the legislative debate.

At the November meeting of the association Ray Markey, president of local 1930, spoke on the impact of the Clinton health plan on NYPL

employees and retirees. The Library has a comparatively good health plan, and much is at stake in the Clinton proposal. Its effect on retirees needs to be studied.

## More Hours of Opening for Libraries

If you have not already heard, NYPL will stay open longer. We quote from part of an editorial in *The New York Times*, September 13, 1993.

"In 1991 some branches were closed for all but 14 hours a week. By the end of this month the library will begin to rebound from the bruising budget cuts. A \$23 million increase in New York City's fiscal 1994 budget will enable the libraries to resume some operation in all branches six days a week by May 1994."

The editorial then criticizes the libraries for not being open during the hours when they are most needed. As a result of the increased funding and the lengthening of hours, some of this criticism is no longer valid. The editorial also emphasized the lack of books and the scarcity of study space in the homes of city children. This problem makes libraries an important necessity.

## Invitation to Holiday Party

Ray Markey, on behalf of Local 1930, has invited NYPL retirees to the Local 1930 Holiday Party:

Saturday, January 8, 1994  
from 6:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m.

DC 37, 125 Barclay Street  
Please call Ray Markey if you plan to attend.

Telephone number: 212 815-1928

## IN THE MAIL

"I haven't gotten a raise since I retired from The New York Public Library. I can't make it. My pension is five hundred and twenty five dollars. With the Social Security I receive each month I just about make it to pay the rent and the electric and the telephone. Medicine costs thirty dollars a month. My bills are big, not small."

from a letter to Juanita Doares written by a member of this association on July 17, 1993.

## Spring Valley's Fellowship Community

At one of its recent meetings, Rose Marie O'Leary reported to the Association on her trip to the Spring Valley Fellowship Community, a unique place to retire. It is located in the midst of flowers and gardens, and it emphasizes "the dynamic exchange of all age groups." Art and music are important here, as are also handicrafts of all kinds. Lack of money is not an obstacle, for no one is kept away because of an inability to support himself or herself. As fund raisers, the community has various cottage industries such as weavery and pottery, as well as a candleshop, printshop and a store. This is not a place for those who would "rather play bingo, shuffleboard, and watch movies all day." The community is an extension and application of the work of Rudolf Steiner. For information write:

Rudolf Steiner Fellowship Foundation  
241 Hungry Hollow Road  
Spring Valley, NY 10977  
telephone number 914 356-8494

## New York Historical Society

Many retirees have been concerned about the troubles that could force the New York Historical Society to close. Its library has long been associated with the New York Public Library, and generations of NYPL librarians went there to work or to volunteer after they retired. An example is Wilberforce Eames, one of NYPL's most famous librarians, who was always involved with the Society's library. He had been director of the Lenox Library and came to NYPL with the consolidation agreement. There he established both the American History Division and the Rare Book Room, finally becoming the Library's Bibliographer, a position that no longer exists. As he grew older, he spent his daytimes at the Society and his evenings at NYPL.

There is now at least temporary relief, for its library has been taken over by New York University. A one year agreement between the two institutions took effect August 1. To help with its drastic financial situation the state legislature last April allocated \$6.3 million to the Society, with the city providing matching funds in May. For more information see *American Libraries*, Sept. 1993, p.694

## IBM Gallery to Close

One of the best museums in New York City is the IBM Gallery in the IBM building at Madison Avenue and 57th Street. Its exhibitions of art and science are remarkably well chosen and designed. They receive laudatory reviews from the best critics.

Furthermore, it is all free, which makes it unique in New York City, where the entrance "donations" have risen in most museums to the point where, even with a senior citizen discount, the number of museum visits must be reduced.

IBM has decided to close the gallery at the end of January 1994. It will be a sad loss. If you would like to protest, please write a letter to:

Roy Lee,  
Program Administrator  
IBM  
590 Madison Avenue  
New York, NY 10022

## Bargains for New Yorkers

### Zoo Membership

One of the biggest bargains in town is a membership in the New York Zoological Society, or as it is now called, NYZS/The Wildlife Conservation Society. If you live in Manhattan, you can get your exercise by taking walks in Central Park, which if you do not already know, has been greatly improved by the private organization called The Central Park Conservatory. Here is where the zoo membership comes in especially handy, for you can usually include the zoo in your walking trip, and it is a fine place to eat a snack or just sit on one of the many benches and enjoy the beautiful surroundings. If you haven't been to New York City in recent years, you need to be told that the zoo has been redone and is now a beautiful park within a park. It also has some of the cleanest public restrooms in the city. If you go to the zoo on weekdays, you avoid the crowds, and on cloudy or rainy days, when the park is most beautiful, you almost have it to

yourself. A membership card admits you to The Bronx Zoo, The New York Aquarium, The Queens Zoo, and The Central Park Zoo. An individual membership is \$41 for a year. A senior membership is \$33. A double membership that admits two is the best bargain at \$53, and a family membership, which includes children and grandchildren, is \$58. To join, you can send a check with your name and address to:

The Membership Office  
NYZS/Wildlife Conservation Society  
Bronx Zoo  
Bronx, NY 10460

### Museum Memberships

Another bargain is membership in the American Museum of Natural History. Like many museums in New York, it too has been enlarged and rehabilitated. Many exhibitions have been dramatically changed, such as the hall of gems and minerals. And if you really want the dramatic, the museum now has one of the largest movie screens. It can make you believe you are in the midst of a rain forest or the Grand Canyon. As usual, there are many events such as lectures and tours. Although expensive, their chartered trips throughout the world have a good reputation. Membership for a year is \$25 for an individual and \$50 for a family. The fee includes free admission and subscriptions to the museum's periodicals. To join, send a check with your name and address to:

Membership Office  
The American Museum of Natural History  
Central Park West at 79th Street  
New York, NY 10024

## Lectures and Concerts at The New York Public Library

Retirees of the Library are entitled to one free ticket to each lecture in the Bartos Forum, according to availability. To obtain the tickets, fill out and mail the form in the lecture brochure and indicate that you are a retiree. If you do not already have a brochure, you can request to be put on the mailing list by sending a postcard to:

Public Education Program  
Room M-6  
The New York Public Library  
Fifth Avenue at 42nd Street  
New York, NY 10018

As you may know, many of the Library's events are listed in the monthly calendar available in all the branches. Included in this listing are the various concerts and other activities in the Donnell Library's auditorium and many of the recitals in the Bruno Walter auditorium at Lincoln Center. A complete listing of the Bruno Walter auditorium events can be found in a publication obtainable in the Library and Museum of the Performing Arts at Lincoln Center.

## The Greenwich Village Orchestra

Rosemary O'Leary recommends the Greenwich Village Orchestra Concerts, held in Washington Irving High School. Admission for seniors is \$4.00. These concerts are not to be confused with the People's Concerts mentioned in the last newsletter, which are also held at Washington Irving. For information write to:

The Greenwich Village Orchestra  
P.O. Box 1110  
Madison Square Station  
New York, NY 10159

## You Can Go Home Again

The return of retirees to New York City has recently been the subject of various studies. The following is quoted from an editorial in *The New York Times* of August 28, 1993. The title is "Old Folks at Home."

"Even when one is strongly aware of the city's continual contradictions, one of its newest immigrant groups is a surprise. Why would the elderly flock to a place where, at worst, bullets are known to fly and where, at best, crossing the street can take a running back's dash-and-dodge?

"Maybe 'flock' isn't quite the word. Maybe 'trickle' is more like it. But a constant trickle they are, those over-75's who are leaving the comparative serenity of Miami Beach or Tucson for traffic, crowds and angst. 'This is where the action is,' a Bleecker Street resident who is surely 90 and maybe more told a Times reporter recently.

"This is also where more than three times as many elderly are in home care programs as in nursing homes, and where the [New York City] Department of Aging alone provides about 12.5 million home-delivered meals. It is a place where buses are frequent, movies are many and one doesn't have to drive three miles to a shopping mall for a quart of milk and a dozen eggs. And it is a place where simply to look out a window is to see

the stars of a hundred different dramas."

For those of you who have been away a long time, buses have improved in recent years, senior citizens pay half fare 24 hours a day, and in the center of Manhattan covered bus stops have appeared. Movies give reduced prices in the afternoons, and some have extended the reductions into the evenings. Museums have special entrance fees. Various institutions have established senior centers. Central Park has been improved. Crime, still present, has supposedly decreased over the last few years according to studies, although you would hardly believe it from the tabloids. Medical facilities are said to be among the best in the country. But if you like the beauties of nature and the quiet of a small town, a backyard full of flowers, clean streets, pretty houses, and local gossip, then you might be lucky to stay where you are.

## When You Take Medicine

The October-November issue of *Modern Maturity* has an article on pages 11 and 12 about the relationship of older persons to medicine. Many physicians and druggists do not realize that dosages for older people should be altered because the medicine stays in the body longer. Side affects can also differ with age. Specially annoying is the fact that although directions on a medicine bottle may prescribe dosages for children, little or nothing is said about the older person. But what difference does this make when one cannot read the fine print on the box or bottle? Even young people have trouble. There is a movement to prohibit such tiny print, but so far not much evidence of its success.



## Association Trip to Museum of African Art

By Betty Gubert

On November 11th eleven members and friends of this association toured the Museum for African Art in its new quarters in SoHo. Formerly the Center for African Art, the museum reopened last February in a space designed by Naya Lin, the architect of the Vietnam memorial sculpture in Washington, D.C.

The exhibition we saw, *Face of the Gods: Art and Altars of Africa and the African-Americans*, was curated by Professor Robert Farris Thompson of Yale. It explored the altar as both ritual and art, and it also demonstrated the impact of African-inspired spiritual and aesthetic systems in New York and in the Americas. This was the first time in its ten years that the Museum has included art of the African Diaspora. Our understanding was enhanced by our enthusiastic and knowledgeable guide. The outing was concluded by lunch at a nearby restaurant.

The Museum is located at 593 Broadway. The telephone number 966-1313. [Editor's note: The author of this item is a volunteer at the museum, and she selects African cook books and children's books about Africa for the museum's store.]

No man has a right to bring up his children without surrounding them with good books. He cheats them. A library is not a luxury, but one of the necessities of life.

—Henry Ward Beecher

## The Book Corner

by Juanita Doares

*Libraries and the Future: Essays on the Library in the Twenty-First Century*, edited by F.W. Lancaster, Professor, Graduate School of Library and Information Science, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

The book emphasizes the delivery of information, not its storage, and it says a library should be judged by the services it delivers and not the assets it controls

*The Graying of the World: Who Will Care for the Frail Elderly?* edited by Laura Katz Olson, Professor of Government, Lehigh University.

The book tells how various nations cope with the problems of the elderly, and it provides information on new ways to respond to issues related to elder-care.

*Women and Aging, Celebrating Ourselves*, by Ruth Raymond Thone, writer, teacher, Lincoln, Nebraska.

This is a guide for aging which urges women to overcome the restrictions of a youth-oriented society. Women should break through the negative stereotypes of old age.

*Yogurt, Yogourt, Youghourt: An International Cookbook* by Linda K. Fuller, Assistant Professor, Worcester State College, Massachusetts.

Yogurt recipes collected from over 50 different countries. The book tells about food that is tasty and at the same time good for you.

## Recipes Quick, Healthy, and Tasty

For a salad dressing take 1 tablespoon of Dijon mustard, 1/2 cup plain, low-fat yogurt, juice of 1/2 lemon (you can use the bottled juice), 2 tablespoons wine vinegar, and black pepper to taste. Mix them together (for creamier texture shake in a covered jar or place in a blender). Makes approximately 3/4 cup. Only 6 calories and no fat. [Source: Laura Stein, *The Bloomingdale's Eat Healthy Diet*, St. Martin's Press, 1986. 613.25 S in NYPL branches]

*Seasons  
Greetings  
and  
Peace  
on  
Earth*

## *Meetings and Special Events of the Association*

Monday, December 13, 1993  
Health Committee open meeting for all members  
4:30 Staff Room, Mid-Manhattan Library

Monday, December 13, 1993  
Holiday social for all members  
6:30 p.m. at Maison Japonaise  
125 East 39th Street (between Lexington and Park)  
for reservations call 666-5737 or 255-9168

Monday, January 17, 1994  
Annual meeting

Wednesday, February 15, 1994

Monday, March 21, 1994

Wednesday, April 20, 1994

Monday, May 16, 1994

Wednesday, June 15, 1994

*Note:* All meetings are scheduled for Mid-Manhattan Library. The location in the library will be announced.

For books are more than books,  
they are the life  
The very heart and core of ages past.  
The reason why men lived and worked  
and died,  
The essence and quintessence of  
their lives.

—Amy Lowell, *The Boston Athenaeum*

## Editor's Notes

*Library Memorabilia*—We emphasize the importance of Mr. Sink's request. Retirees need to remind present and future employees that the Library did exist before their time and that libraries need a knowledge of their past far more than do commercial establishments. For example, to know where and how a manuscript or book was obtained is sometimes as important as the item itself. To find an obscure item, a historical knowledge of the library's collections and structure can help. To know how the Library developed can be of help in understanding its daily operation. And a knowledge of past experience can prevent that costly duplication effort known as the reinvention of the wheel. An archive can also be a reminder that money alone did not build the Library, although usually only the names of wealthy benefactors are engraved on its pillars. Thousands of people have spent their lifetimes in serving the institution. It did not automatically obtain fame for its excellence.

Larry Murphy

## Report of the Nominating Committee

by Mercy Kellogg

All nominations were unanimous except Fred Gee, who as a member of the Nominating Committee raised the question of the propriety of accepting a position on the slate. He was suspended for insubordination for 5 minutes during which time a majority of the Committee voted to place his name on the slate as Treasurer.

The Nominating Committee is pleased to submit the following slate of officers for terms starting January 1, 1994.

President:

Juanita S. Doares

Vice-President:

Agnes Babich

Secretary:

Mary Ann Altman

Treasurer:

Fred T. Gee

Executive Board:

Moritia Leah Frederick

Betty Gubert

Lawrence Murphy

Respectfully submitted,

Mercy P. Kellogg, Chair

Theresa K. Casile

Fred T. Gee

October 20, 1993

At the October meeting, those present accepted the report of the committee. At the annual meeting of the association in January, a vote will be taken. If you have additional names to nominate, please send them before January 1, 1994 to:

Mercy Kellogg

184 Sullivan Street

New York, NY 10012

Give me the liberty to know, to utter, and to argue freely according to conscience, above all liberties.

—Milton, *Areopagitica*

The New York  
Public Library  
Retirees Association  
*An Independent Association*

Interim Executive Committee:  
Agnes Babich, Juanita Doares,  
Moritia-Leah Frederick and Betty  
Gubert

To join the NYPL Retirees  
Association, send annual dues of  
\$10 to:

NYPL Retirees Association  
Betty Gubert, Treasurer  
150 W. 96 St., #3D  
New York, NY 10025

Send information for the  
newsletter to:

NYPL Retirees Association  
Newsletter  
c/o Larry Murphy, Editor  
137 E. 36 St., #16-B  
New York, NY 10016

All other information and  
inquires:

NYPL Retirees Association  
c/o Juanita Doares  
401 W. 118th St., #3  
New York, NY 10027  
212 666-5737

The Association's  
Committees and Their  
Members

*Health Care Committee*

Moritia Leah Frederick, Chair  
Agnes Babich  
Larry Cioppa  
Mercy Kellogg  
Ann Moy

*Legislative Committee*

Belle Weinberg, Chair  
Lucy Eldridge  
Nora Gorchoff

*Social Committee*

Rosemary O'Leary, Chair  
Betty Gubert

If you would like to serve on one of  
these committees, please contact  
Juanita Doares. The Health Care  
Committee is especially in need of  
help because our association will be  
preparing a position statement on  
the Clinton health plan. Our  
legislative committee will also need  
help as we work with other  
associations throughout the State  
on the MOPP bill.

Report of the Interim  
Treasurer

by Betty Gubert

We are beginning our second  
year with 120 members living in 16  
states. The Association is open to all  
retirees of The New York Public  
Library, regardless of the position held  
at retirement. We will continue to  
address pressing concerns such as  
health care and pension supplements,  
as well as all other issues that are  
important to our membership. We  
need strong voices, and heads and  
hands too, to effect changes. We urge  
you to continue your membership and  
to recruit others. We all have a stake  
in affecting the legislation that  
determines cost-of-living increases and  
health care. We will continue to  
maintain liasons with other  
organizations such as the Retired  
Public Employees Association [of New  
York State] (RPEA), the Alliance of  
Public Retiree Organizations (APRO),  
and the American Association of  
Retired Persons (AARP).

The annual dues are \$10.00.  
Please join or renew your membership  
today by filling out the blank below  
and sending a check to Betty Gubert,  
Interim Treasurer, 150 West 96th  
Street, #3D, New York, NY 10025. If  
you would like more information, call  
212 749-6293.

THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY RETIREES' ASSOCIATION

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