

New York Public Library Retirees Association Newsletter

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STUART LEIBOWITZ ON THE ECONOMY, POLITICS, UNIONS, AND US

With the economy, social security, health care, and public pensions in the news every day, our Association President, Becky Koppelman, invited Stuart Leibowitz, President of the DC37 Retirees Association, to speak at our meeting on December 20th. Jacob Azeke, NYPL Retirees Association Executive Board member and Vice President of the DC37 Retirees Association, made the introduction. Leibowitz joined the city workforce in 1961, served 25 years as Vice President of Local 371 of DC 37, retired, became the Deputy Chair of the Office of Collective Bargaining in 2001, and was elected President of the DC 37 Retirees Association. He presently co-chairs the Pension Committee of DC 37, chairs the New York City chapter of the Alliance for Retired Americans (ARA) under the Central Labor Council, and is a retiree delegate to the DC 37 Executive Board. While attending Brooklyn College, he worked in the stacks of the Brooklyn Public Library.

Below is a recap of Mr. Leibowitz's remarks. It contains both direct quotes and paraphrases without distinguishing between the two.

Leibowitz began his remarks by saying that we are blessed as public employees because we were astute enough to secure for ourselves a reasonable future retirement. In Leibowitz's case, he began as a caseworker in the old Department of Public Welfare. The caseworker position required a baccalaureate





degree. If you wanted to make money, you worked on Wall Street; if you wanted to sleep well, you worked for the city. Leibowitz said he worked hard, was promoted, tried to improve the working conditions of his fellow workers, and helped secure a dignified retirement plan. When he began in 1961 under the old fractional pension plan, one could retire at 55, but nobody ever did because the pensions were too small. Unless you had health problems, you waited until you were 65. Then you linked your pension with social security and could retire, but were probably dead by 70. That is what it was like two generations ago. In those days, the kids had to assist the parents. Today we are retiring younger, are healthier, live longer, and get higher pensions, so we are the ones helping the kids. What a role reversal!

As Leibowitz relates it, we worked for what we got, and nobody gave us anything. Now, we won't stand still while people are trying to take away what we worked for. In the early 1960's, we used to look at other city titles to see if they got more money than we did. We looked at teachers, who also only needed a baccalaureate degree then. If the teachers got a \$500 raise, we would applaud and shoot for it, too. Today, because we have so many things other workers don't have, they want to drag us down to their level rather than reaching up to ours. This is a revolution in thinking, even among labor people.

One of the reasons for the attacks on us and the decline in benefits is the decline in the union movement. In the private sector only 8% of workers are union; 92% are not. In the public sector 37% are union. In New York State almost all public employees are in a union. Unions equal strength and benefits. It was because of the unions that workers got defined-benefit pensions, healthcare, and more. The decline of unions has accompanied the decline in and erosion of defined-benefit pensions in the private sector. But in the public sector, there is the last vestige of defined-benefit pensions and healthcare plans, including Medicare Part B reimbursement. Why the difference? The unions provided the benefits, secured the benefits, and continued to protect the benefits. We tell the workers they are retirees in training. They should hope to live to become retirees like us. We say don't cut retiree benefits today, since the benefits are waiting for you tomorrow. There is no dichotomy between a worker and a retiree; we have to strengthen each other. The more we do for them, the more they do for us. We must remember we are not an island unto ourselves. Unions are the bulwark for protecting the benefits we have.

Without the union, we would be left to the tender mercies of Governor Cuomo and Mayor Bloomberg. However you feel about them, they are gunning for us. They see us as the British saw American GI's: overpaid, overfed, oversexed, and over here. They want to drag us down. Even the private sector labor movement joins in this. There is a schism between active workers and retirees, the construction unions and the public employee unions.

Here are some of the issues affecting us as retirees and as citizens, according to Leibowitz. Starting in Washington, there is tremendous pressure to reduce Social Security benefits. It is alleged, and it is a lie, that Social Security is in trouble. Medicare might have problems, but not Social Security. Every year, until this past year, Social Security generated a profit. Growing up in Brownsville Brooklyn, Leibowitz



says, he knew that you made a profit if you brought in more than you paid out. Social Security generated a surplus, hundreds of billions of dollars, which by law had to be invested in government bonds. The Social Security system has 2½ trillion dollars in bonds, even more than the Chinese have. The bonds produce interest, which helps the federal government balance-sheet. This past year, because there are 15 billion people out of work, there are fewer contributions into the system. Now Social Security may be paying out more than it is taking in, but that is an anomaly. The Social Security actuaries, who are very, very conservative in their estimates, say that if nothing is done to change the system, there is enough money to pay benefits until the year 2037, twenty-seven years from now. Come 2037, the system will still be able to pay 75% of the benefits. This is not a system that is broken; this is not a system in trouble. The system is so flush that the President made the recent tax agreement with Congress to provide a 2% reduction in Social Security payroll tax because we can survive the cut in the short run.

Your union has been in the vanguard of fighting back, trying to get the other parts of the labor union movement to agree to no erosion of benefits, no cuts. Number one, it is not necessary; number two, if benefits are cut, we go down a slippery slope. When President Bush was trying to get privatization of Social Security he said, well, you who are presently collecting Social Security won't be affected. He was planning to cut Social Security for our children and

grandchildren. We fought back and made sure nothing happened. The labor movement and AARP were opposed to Social Security cuts six years ago. Social Security has nothing to do with the deficit. Social Security has helped alleviate the deficit by having a surplus over the years.

Medicare is another matter. Although Medicare runs well and is efficient, health costs are rising precipitously at 10% a year; the rates are phenomenal. The current health care legislation is trying to curb some of these costs.

Moving down a level, there is Albany. Our State pensions are guaranteed by the Constitution; there can be no cut in pension benefits. Governor Cuomo and Mayor Bloomberg are not pleased with this. If they have to reduce benefits for public employees and public employee retirees, the focus of the cut will be on health care. Just as Willie Sutton robbed banks because that is where the money is, so politicians look to where the money goes to public employee and retiree benefits. The hit may come on wages, in a similar way to the salary freezes President Obama mandated for federal employees. Although New York State politicians can't touch pensions, there have been calls for a State constitutional convention. In theory, the convention could change the constitution and remove the protection that prohibits any diminution of pension benefits. Even the New York Times and Mayor Bloomberg are opposed to calling a State



constitutional convention because of the mischief it could cause.

In term of health care, the State can reduce aid to the City of New York. The City receives substantial reimbursement from both Washington, DC, and Albany. If the State cuts back a billion or two of aid to the City, health care may be cut. When Albany sneezes, New York City catches a cold. Mayor Bloomberg, a lame duck mayor, threatens the Central Labor Committee with a need for reduction in benefits. The City spends five billion dollars for health benefits for active and retired beneficiaries. Ten percent of the benefits are for retirees. The mayor's threat is this: if you will not give up benefits, I will lay off workers. Since retirees cannot be laid off, the mayor is trying to create a schism between the active and the retired employees. He will say the retirees aren't making any sacrifice; it is only coming from you active workers. Thus far the Municipal Labor Committee (MLC) has held off on consenting to any reduction in benefits. A reduction in benefits will come in one of three ways: in a cut in the reimbursement for Medicare Part B, in payments for basic health care, or in payments to wealthier retirees. The battle in the press will have Mayor Bloomberg blaming us, the unions, the workers, and retirees for not giving him concessions, thereby causing the

layoffs of thousands of workers. You can see it in New Jersey. In Jersey City and Newark, they are laying off police officers and blaming the union.

In the 1970's, we were threatened with being paid in scrip. Victor Gotbaum said we have to save collective bargaining. We have to be wary of giving up fringe benefits, since once you give them up, you may never get them back. We have to be resolute and defiant and say no. That is easy for us because we cannot be fired. We worked hard for our benefits; we didn't get them for free. We sacrificed wage increases and other benefits to put away money for our retirement and health benefits so we could sleep

well at night. That is why many of us chose to work in the public sector. We have to hope that we will get out of this fiscal mess, survive it. We were here before Bloomberg got here, and we will be here after he leaves. We have to stay healthy. We are going to outlive them, outsmart them, and continue to be an asset to the community.

Some of you are not union members because you are management. However, you are eligible for membership in the DC 37 Retirees Association if you were ever a DC 37 member. Dues are \$3 a month or \$36 a year. Joining gives you a local now that you aren't working.

When George Meaney was asked what labor wants, he said labor wants more. A final joke: The boss was negotiating with the union, but the boss died. The son, who took over the negotiations, told the members that the management had given them everything they asked for. The members started booing him and throwing chairs at him. The president asked why they were doing this. Someone yelled out, "If we had known we would get everything we asked for, we would have asked for more."

QUESTIONS FOR MR. LEIBOWITZ

How can I find out about my DC 37 benefits?

Call 212 815-1234.

Why can't we use the DC 37 clinics?

The NYPL stopped paying for your use of the DC 37 clinics, but you can still use the participating medical providers. There is a list of providers on the DC 37 website.

How would the process toward a state constitutional convention begin and what can we do to stop it?

The Senate and Assembly would have to pass a measure setting up a convention. All public employee unions will fight this. The unions will work to prevent any measure from getting out of committee. Know this, Governor Cuomo is not a friend of public employee unions or public employee retirees.

What about reimbursement of the surplus deducted from Medicare Part B?

Leibowitz asked the questioner to speak to him after the meeting. [Editor's Note: Leibowitz promised to look into this. The questioner was told that no one had ever brought this up before. Mention of it appeared in the Public Employee Press's Active Retiree issue, Summer 2009. The NYPL Board of Trustees will discuss the issue at its March meeting.]

If there have to be givebacks, why not give back Medicare Part B reimbursement?

The slippery slope. Once you give up any piece of a benefit, nothing prevents the employer from coming back and hitting you up again and



again. Any government, whether city, state, or federal – even when it is not in a fiscal crisis – requires money. Budgets are always about priorities. The city budget is over \$64 billion. That is a lot of money. The question is priority -- who gets that money, and what is it being spent on? The city does not require our givebacks to balance the budget. They contract out \$10 billion of services which could be performed by public employees. We are not approaching an extreme situation. The city does not have to cut us in order to maintain a balanced budget and keep providing city services. The situation was extreme thirty-five years ago when the city laid off 65,000 workers. The city was broke. God forbid that should ever happen again.

What about pension raises? Our pensions are not keeping up with rising prices.

Pension raises come by increases in the COLA (Cost of Living Adjustments) applied to New York State pensions. The COLA must pay at least one percent of the first \$18,000 in pension benefit. If somebody retires with a pension of \$40,000 or \$50,000, they just get credit for the first \$18,000. That is statutory. In the past, we used to say give us the same COLA that Social



NYPL DC37 Trust Fund meeting. The Trust Fund could deny payment.

I'm not getting the union paper any more. Am I entitled to it?

One of the benefits of being a member of the DC37 Retirees Association is receiving the union paper.

Security gives. Social Security COLA pays on the full amount of a Social Security pension and you can get 100% of the COLA benefit. Under New York State law you can only get 50% of the first 6% of the COLA benefit.

This is the second consecutive year that Social Security has paid nothing in Social Security COLA. The state pension continues to generate COLA payments for us. In our September issue of the *Public Employee Press*, the paper plotted on a chart how much money has been received from the pension COLA since the time it started. From 2001 on, Leibowitz has been a pension recipient. Now those in his category are making over \$2000 a year more in pension benefits because those little amounts of COLA accumulate year after year, one on top of the other. We have legislative proposals seeking to improve the pension COLA formula. With the state in fiscal distress, this probably won't happen. Presently we get a COLA of 1% of first \$1,800, which is \$180 a year or \$15 a month. Leibowitz said that since 2001 this has generated \$2,300 for him.

Please explain the refunding of Medicare Part B?

You are not in the same category for the refunding as non-pedagogical workers. Your reimbursement comes under the Taft Hartley Law. NYPL trustees have to decide how much to pay. Then the matter is brought up at a

I'm concerned about the 2% cut in the payroll tax for Social Security. Treasury says they will pick up the cost. Will the payroll tax be restored in January of an election year? It was very sneaky the way it was presented: first as a reduction in the payroll tax and then as a reduction of the social security contribution. It makes many of us nervous.

The law will sunset in a year. Congress and the White House will have to revisit it again next year. President Obama cut this deal with the usual suspects. The economy will determine what will happen with this. The city is showing glacial improvement in the economy. The danger of renewing it again next year is that you don't want to underfund Social Security. Governor Christie of New Jersey is deliberately not putting any money into the New Jersey pension system. When will it go belly up? If we continue not putting the appropriate amount into the Social Security system, sooner or later something is going to happen.

Don't you think cutting the Social Security payroll tax is really a way to say later that we won't have enough money to pay for Social Security?

Yes. Now it is a one year proviso. How much longer will this proviso last?

You mentioned what Governor Christie is doing in New Jersey. Part of the problem, as I understand

it, is that the state of New Jersey was borrowing money from the pension fund to use for other purposes. And that is one of the reasons they are short now. Do you know if there is any similar situation in New York?

No. The unions are much too strong in New York to allow that to happen. Unions are much stronger in New York than in New Jersey. The city puts its money in every year. The first Governor Cuomo and/or Governor Pataki tried to raid the pension fund but that tactic was stopped by court action.

Governor-Elect Cuomo is creating an anti-union coalition. What is the union doing about it?

First of all, there is no “The Union.” The governor is trying to work with the private sector unions, particularly the building trades unions, to divide them from the public employee unions. The interests of each are not identical. Leibowitz said that in Brooklyn where he lives, there is pressure to bring in a Walmart. The building trades unions want it because it would create jobs for them. A lot of the community want it because it would provide jobs and cheaper prices. Other unions are against it because Walmart is anti-union and does not pay union wages. There is a split, and it is not easy to reconcile. There is no “union movement” even though there is a Central Labor Council and a State Federation of Labor. All the public unions will unite in opposing the calling of a convention or the convening of a convention. What will the private sector unions do? Will the governor buy them off with jobs? We will see. The public employee unions are opposed; they could lose the constitutional protection which forbids pension reduction.

The press demonization of unions, such as the teachers union, is endless, in “the paper of record”



particularly. We must unite with others because the press says we have lousy teachers, and we have librarians who don't work. We don't control the media. What are your thoughts on this?

You are right. The UFT (United Federation of Teachers) has a column every week in the Sunday New York Times. Opinion leaders do read that. If you read the Daily News and the New York Post, and you follow Fox News, there is no letup. Some of you may remember when the transit workers went out on strike, and Michael Quill was interviewed by Gabe Pressman. Asked if he would have public support, he said the public doesn't like to walk. Unions can't count on public support, and I don't think they should. We have to count on our own strength, do it on our own, and try to educate the private sector unions. But if we wait for them, we are doomed. We have to do what we have to do. We must fight for our interests. There is an old adage: there are no permanent allies and no permanent enemies, only permanent interests. We have to keep our eyes on the prize, take what we can get.

Stuart Leibowitz wished us a happy, healthy, and peaceful New Year.



First of three tours
Sal Magaddino on the right

LIBRARY SERVICE CENTER TOUR

To accommodate our members, The Library Service Center kindly hosted three tours of the facility. Assistant Director of Logistics and Distribution, Sal Magaddino, our enthusiastic tour guide, assured us that The New York Public Library's Library Service Center has improved customer services, saved money, supported the Library's goal of "One Library," and provided an attractive work environment. Since the Center's January opening, visitors have come from around the world, especially to see the Center's new sorter and digital processing.

THE BUILDING

After looking at four or five locations in Manhattan and the Bronx, the Library chose the Long Island City building because of its central location near bridges and tunnels (only five minutes from Queens to Manhattan) and its generous space, which includes

four loading bays usable all night long and a parking lot on the roof with space for twelve trucks, saving the Library \$100,000 annually in parking fees and allowing for maximum security. Vendor parking is provided at the side of the building.

The Library has leased the building for 100 years, with the option to buy when the lease expires. This timeframe has allowed the Library to renovate the space to suit its needs. The

1971 building, with 160,000

square feet on four floors, was originally a watch factory and almost entirely abandoned for ten years.

THE SORTER

Our tour began on the lower level where the Danish-manufactured sorter moves at a speed of two and one-half miles an hour, sorting 11,000 items in that time. It is the largest and most advanced sorter of its kind in the world. In the past, material was trucked from many locations and then sorted at the Annex for shipping to the branches. Sorting was done manually and took from early morning until as late as eight o'clock at night. Today, sorting is completed by noon. Staff members place each item on individual squares on the conveyor belt, with the item's external barcode facing up. The item is scanned instantly by an overhead scanner, and when it reaches the appropriate bin, it is tipped in. There are 132 bins, at least one for each location. Some large locations have two or three bins, including those for items to be shelved and others for items to be held for a patron's reserve. When the sorter's operation began, 30% of the items had barcode problems; that percentage is now down to 5%.

A new “Floating Collection” policy mandates that books returned to a branch stay at that branch. This has reduced both shipping and sorting. However, large units such as Lincoln Center and Mid Manhattan retain their own material, and a branch may chose to send a returned item to another branch or back to the Center. At the Center, the items are reassigned by staff since new items are no longer given branch-specific labels.

COLLECTION PROCESSING

The Acquisition Department places orders, receives incoming material, and processes payments. Materials arriving at the Center, whether from vendors or branches, are delivered to the lower level. Some items are shipped directly to the branches, bypassing the Center.

The Cataloging Department processes items for all branch and research units except Schomburg. Items are checked first by Fast Track Cataloging to see if catalog records have already been established by the Library of Congress or another library. If items for the research units cannot be found, they are put on shelves to be rechecked in four to six months, or referred on to divisions for Western European Languages, Non-Roman Alphabets, Scripts, Serials, and the Media Team. There continue to be some cataloging backlogs, including about 2,000 items from the former Donnell Central Children’s Room.

The Collection Processing Department makes items shelf-ready for both the branches and the research units. Item records are updated and labels applied. In FY09, staff processed 887,000 items. The binding budget has been cut so, with the exception of music scores, few items are bound. Instead, special envelopes are used.

The Library leases popular items. They are distributed to branches for circulation for six month and are then are returned. Books by Mail applications



The Sorter

come from the branches, and the books are mailed to patrons from the Center.

DIGITAL IMAGING UNIT

An important and impressive part of our tour was the Digital Imaging Unit, a growing department in which additional equipment will be needed to keep up with demand. The Library expects digitizing to go at a feverish pace for at least the next few years when there may be a drop in print publication. Because of the high demand for digitizing, the Library is hiring in this area, and job security is good.

The Center digitizes material for library use and also in response to fee-based public requests for material for research, exhibitions, or publication. The Library website has online request forms. Copyright issues are considered before digitizing for presentations, media requests, and exhibitions, but copyright is not an issue for research use. Google and the Library have different approaches to digitizing. The Library’s emphasis is on digitizing out-of-copyright material.

Most digital imaging is done at the Center, but some rare books, large atlases, and prints are digitized at a



Boxed Special Format Material

40th Street location. Elaborate professional-level photographic equipment fills several of the ten stations. Several different methods of digitizing are used. By one method books are placed in a book cradle; two cameras above face open pages; suction and air turn the pages. The operator just makes sure that nothing goes wrong. The digitized books become readable and searchable PDF files and are available to library patrons. The public are not allowed to use these machines. The Library may let Google do more of the ordinary book digitizing and reserve the Library's specialized staff for more complex work.

The lifetime of digitized material depends on the durability of the media on which it is stored. The Library is working to find secure storage, and the digitized material is backed up repeatedly. In theory, the backups should outlast the original material.

SPECIAL FORMAT PROCESSING

An enormous backlog of boxed special formatted material, kept at below 68 degrees, waits for attention on long lines of shelves extending along a wall nearly the width of the Center.

Included are boxes of organizational records of the New York Times: memos, correspondence, and regulations. One highlight from this collection is an early 1970's letter from NOW, The National

Organization for Women, asking the Times to cease using derogatory terms for women and instead use NOW's preferred terms. A coup for the Library are the papers of Arthur Schlesinger, which are stored at the Center.

Priority for processing is based on several criteria, including patron demand, the prominence of the person involved, and historical interest. Occasionally, money is given to process the gift material, and the Library tries to secure funds for processing large collections.

The Center tries to put material in usable order, but an organization's archives may be kept in the order in which the archives arrived. In these cases, researchers have to learn the filing system of the organization. Personal papers may need much more arranging because the material may have been just thrown in a box.

Patron- ready material is put in the stacks below Bryant Park. Patrons can find a guide to these special materials on the NYPL website, but they must come into the Library to use them. If a patron requests just a few items, the items may be scanned.

Some materials, such as portraits and set designs, are made ready for the digital gallery of the Library's website. These items must be identified and labels prepared. One collection the Library acquired was a staff member's personal collection of theater items from the 1930's and 1940's. Another special collection is dance performances photographed by a female photographer.

EXHIBITION PREPARATION

We were not able to see this area. It is closed to most staff and visitors.

STAFF

On the whole, the staff has enjoyed working in this new facility. It is clean (without the vermin problems found in the Mid Manhattan basement) and well-lit and has ergonomically-designed furniture. There are two staff lounges on the first floor, one for eating and TV watching and one for enjoying the quiet or napping. On the roof are tables and umbrellas for staff use. Each floor has conference rooms. The staff is protected by security cameras and by the use of cards to enter a floor or department. Staff using the sorter do less bending and lifting, use fewer sick days, and are being trained in new skills in the afternoon. On the other hand, the location is not easily accessible for many of the staff who use public transportation. Unfortunately, because the Center is located in a former industrial area, it doesn't have the variety of stores and restaurants that midtown locations have. Some staff members say they save a lot of money by not having Lord and Taylor close by.

THE LIBRARY BEFORE THE DIGITAL AGE

Zahava Szász Stessel, Ph.D
May 6, 2010

Working in the library was very different then. I think we had more fun. Attending at the information desk, I have very pleasant memories of talking to and assisting the readers.

The Jewish Division had a collection of rare books. Serious researchers used it for academic purposes, but occasionally it became the tool for genealogical work as well. One day an old man came in with his grandson. The man related childhood stories about a very famous person in their family. He himself had labored as a carpenter until retired and began to trace his family memories. After some time and efforts we located the information about the small town in



**Subway Station
near Library Service Center**

Eastern Europe his family had come from. Then there was the question of how to spell the original family name. Eventually the search led to the rare book collections. Seeing the grandfather's pride and the glow of his grandson's eyes, as he was holding the leather bound little book written by an almost forgotten great uncle, made me appreciate and take part in the excitement of this family's discovery.

Not all the questions at the information desk were answered successfully. Once, two people, a sister and a brother, arrived with a shoe box full of photographs. They found it when their parents passed away. The photos of former family members were all unmarked. The children hoped that they may find some clues to their identities. Not having any famous historical figures in the family, the search for a match was futile. I was sorry to see the disappointed young people leave the library with their box of puzzling heritage.

As a librarian I learned from every encounter. I know now to mark each photograph with identifying information and I am taking more seriously my childhood family legacies.

NOTES FROM OUR PRESIDENT



Becky Koppelman

Greetings to All!

It's 2011 – another New Year! I hope the old year was a good one for you, although it seemed to pass by quickly, didn't it? I sometimes feel that I hurry from one day to the next, month to month, season to season, and suddenly here we go again, celebrating a new year. But it is good to be busy with things you enjoy.

What's been happening with The New York Public Library? In October, it was announced that, as of July 2011, the Library's next President and CEO will be Dr. Anthony W. (Tony) Marx. Dr Marx, now President of Amherst College and a distinguished political scientist, is a native New Yorker who attended Public School 98 and The Bronx High School of Science. As a boy, he remembers spending time after school using the Inwood Branch Library.

Throughout his diverse and exceptional career, he has always promoted public education as well as public libraries. He feels that the move to the library is “a natural outgrowth of all my experience.” Dr. Marx, will succeed Dr. Paul LeClerc, who is retiring after more than 17 years as President.

Howard Dodson Jr. is also retiring, in February 2011, as Director of the Library's Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture. Mr. Dodson, in his position of leadership over the past 25 years, “developed the center into the world's leading and most prestigious repository for materials and artifacts on the global black experience.” This year, The Schomburg Center will be celebrating its 85th year with an Anniversary Gala and Tribute to Mr. Dodson. Dr. Khalil Gibran Muhammad will succeed Mr. Dodson as Director in July 2011. Dr. Muhammad, who comes from Chicago, is a renowned scholar of African American history and was Assistant Professor of History at Indiana University. He says of his appointment that it is “a tremendous honor and for me one of life's special moments.” (More may be read about all three Directors at the Library's website www.nypl.org)

The NYPL Retirees Association wishes both Dr. LeClerc and Mr. Dodson a wonderful retirement and extends a warm welcome to both new leaders.

And what have we retirees here in the metropolitan area been up to? We have been busy, as you will see from the wonderful articles our Newsletter Editor has written for your enjoyment. And by the time you get this newsletter, we will have had our Annual Holiday Luncheon in January at Kennedy's Steak and Fish Restaurant in mid-town Manhattan. We are trying yet another restaurant, this one with a bigger room to hold all of our attendees. Our association has expanded again with more new members since last year's incentives. We now have 280 members!

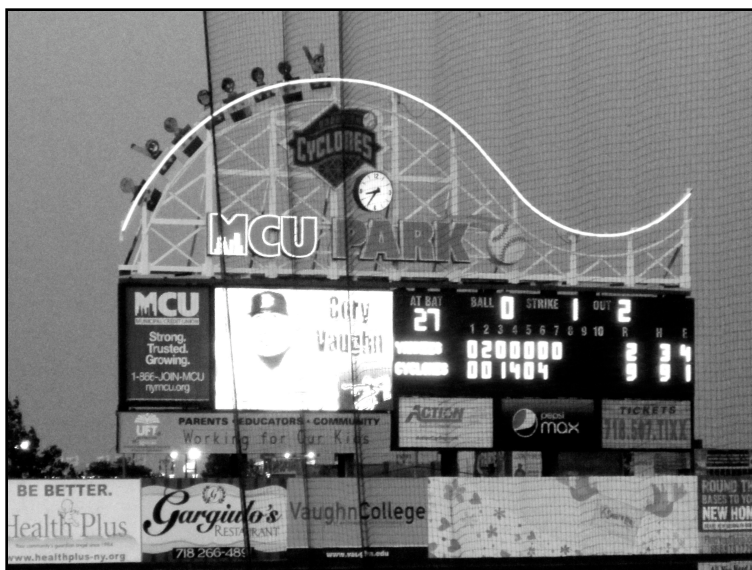
We have had more association members join our Executive Committee and become Members-at-Large: Elga Cace and Ma'Lis Wendt have joined our Library/Legislative committee; Jane Kunstler is our Membership Chairman; on our Social Committee is Estelle Friedman; and Donna Abbaticchio is now our Oral History Project Chairman. If any of you in the metropolitan area are interested in helping with our committees, please let us know.

More outings and general meeting are in the planning stage. We hope to schedule a tour of the special NYPL Exhibit, "Three Faiths: Judaism, Christianity, Islam," in February and a tour of The Morgan Library and Museum in April.

In closing, if you know of any retirees who have not joined the association, please ask them to call us, send an email, or look at our great website, www.nyplra.org. All membership forms, information, and photos are there. Remember, all dues must be paid in order to receive not only your Newsletter, but also information regarding events. For those of you who have paid for 3 years, please fill out and send in your Newssheet information. The form will be arriving soon by email or regular mail.

On behalf of the Executive Committee, Members-at-Large, and myself, we wish you all a wonderful year. And please keep in touch. Everyone loves to hear from you!

Becky Eakins Koppelman



Retirees went to a Brooklyn Cyclones game in June.

FROM THE BENEFITS OFFICE

EXCITING CHANGE AT NYPL

In an effort to provide ease of access to benefits and retirement related questions, the NYPL HR department will be providing you with new contact information. Keep an eye out for additional communications regarding these important changes.

RETIREE HEALTH INSURANCE RATE CHANGES

The annual City of New York health plan retiree rate changes went into effect 1/1/2011. In addition, any changes made during this past year's Open Enrollment Period went into effect 1/1/2011. If your plan was affected or if you made changes to your coverage, you will see the change reflected in your January 2011 pension check.

TURNING 65 IN 2011?

If you, or one of your covered dependents, is turning 65 in 2011 and you have health insurance through NYPL, don't forget to contact Social Security about enrolling in Medicare Parts A and B. All NYPL



Retirees at KeySpan Park

retirees and their covered dependents on an NYPL health plan are required to enroll in both Part A and Part B when they turn 65 regardless of their work status. You should receive additional information about your NYPL coverage and how it relates to Medicare a couple of months before you or your dependent turn 65.

REMINDER-UPDATE YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION!

In order to make sure you receive all important communications, keep NYPL updated of any changes in address, e-mail address, or phone number. Contact NYPL by letter, email, or phone to update your information.

HEALTH ADVOCATE

We are thrilled that some staff members and retirees have already taken advantage of the services Health Advocate provides. For anyone who has not worked with them, Health Advocate can help you understand claims, sort through billing and payment issues, decipher medical information and test results, coordinate home care, and provide assistance with many other issues by dealing directly with your health plan. For additional information or assistance, call Health Advocate at 866-695-8622.

Please contact Lisa Kirsch in the Benefits Office with any questions.

Lisa_kirsch@nypl.org

212-592-7331

RETIREES NEWS

Editor's Note: Keep in mind that many of the News Sheets below were written early this year. In the future, if you'd like, you may email your retiree news to nyplra@earthlink.net

DONNA ABBATICCHIO

I feel very lucky to have more time to spend with my family, including nine nieces and nephews, and fellow retirees and friends; to volunteer, especially at the great animal shelter (I found out I have ten years with N.Y. Cares); and to go to theater, museums, and dining. I'm glad the Retirees Association is there to help keep in touch with many more former colleagues.

DAVID BEASLEY

My creative non-fiction book, *From Bloody Beginnings: Richard Beasley's Upper Canada*, is being hailed as a great book. I shall issue an historical novel, *Violet's Flight*, about Burma during World War II soon. Watch for it on my website www.kwic.com/davus.

I see that Larry Murphy of the droopy eyelids and somnolent voice has been laid to rest. His sleepy appearance hid an active and ambitious spirit. After our rally of celebrities on the front steps of the Central Building to protest the closings on Saturdays in 1969, he offered to help me send out information letters to our dozens of supporters from the Library's automatic typing machine, thereby securing our names and addresses for the Library so that eventually our Concerned Friends of the New York Public Library morphed into the established Friends of the New York Public Library. From protestors they became recipients of fund-raising appeals, thanks in part to Larry Murphy, Management Assistant extraordinaire.

AGNES BECK-STATILE

My sudden departure from the Andrew Heiskell Library was the unfortunate result of a mugging, necessitating total hip replacement and rehabilitation. I'm recovering and walking with a cane at this time, October 2009. Best regards to my former colleagues.

VALORIE BOWERS

I'm busy with fund raising and landmark preservation in my community. I'm treasurer of the Crown Heights North Association, CHNA. We received landmark designation for Phase I on April 24, 2007, and calendared Phase II on June 23, 2009. CHNA is preparing for its Annual House Tour, which is the first Saturday in October. CHNA holds seminars on energy conservation, foreclosures, etc.

ANGELA CALDERELLA

I retired in August 2009, and my husband, Vinny, retired in October 2009! We are planning lots of travel in 2010 to celebrate. The highlight of the year will be a cruise to Canada. Just as Becky said in her presentation at the Pre-Retirement Workshop, we laughed at the first winter snowfall!



Retirees and friends at the January Holiday Lunch

WENDY CALDIERO

I continue to enjoy working on the Four County Library System Board and on the Board of the Afton Free Library. Nick and I enjoy our work with the Afton Historical Society and Afton Museum and are working to organize and list the items in the Museum. Also, I work with a local art committee in organizing various art shows.

We also spend a lot of time landscaping, gardening, growing old roses, and working on our property.

HELEN CHIN

I have been fighting cancer since September 2005. Savanna Club is still a great community! I'm still playing mahjong a few times a week and read a lot.

WILLIAM LEO COAKLEY

I have read Yeats's poetry at the Irish Repertory Theatre and my own at the 80th Birthday Celebration of the great American pacifist David McReynolds,



who was twice the Presidential candidate for the Socialist Party.

EMILY COHEN

I was surprised and pleased to see two familiar names in the recently received membership directory. Sally Helfman and Adele Requeña, who worked in the Office of Children's Services when I started my career at NYPL there as a clerk and then librarian trainee back in 1963!

Editor's Note : We are sorry to report that Adele Requeña died on March 13, 2010, after suffering a stroke from which she never recovered. She was of 91½.

ROSELLA CORY

I am closely and happily involved with my family. Having nine grandchildren and two great-grandchildren keeps me busy attending a variety of events.

BERYL EBER

I am leading students at the Center for Reading and Writing at Seward Park Library towards improving their English skills. My meetings with them twice a week are highlights in my retired life. I am swimming

two to three times a week and increasing my endurance. I go to yoga once a week and take long constitutionals. I have never read so many books!

PATRICK HARDISH

I was fortunate to have a number of performances of my music: my *Two Poems* for soprano voice and piano on June 9, 2010, at Chelsea Museum, 556 West 22nd Street, New York; my *Sonorities VI* for vibraphone on May 11, 2010, at the University of Maryland, Baltimore, and also on June 10, 2009, at Chelsea Museum, New York; and the premiere of my *Sonorific Duo* for flute and percussion on May 18, 2007 at the Greenwich House Music School, New York. The film *Immortal Cupboard*, which has my music for part of its soundtrack, was shown at the Bowery Poetry Club on June 21, 2009. I was one of the speakers at a recent meeting of the NYPL Retirees Association at the Mid Manhattan Library on May 7, 2010.

My mother passed away March 3, 2010, at 91 ½ after a long illness. I had been her caretaker since her stroke in 2002. I retired in 2007 to take care of her full-time.

JESSIE LEE JOHNSON

I had the privilege of working directly for many years with three wonderful reference librarians- Edward C. Nelson, Robert Powers, Burt Abelson - and with great colleagues and friends.

RENEE KOTLER

My daughter, Jennifer, got married, my grandkids are a joy, and I just returned from Prague and Paris! Life is good!

LUCY KUNG

Since I left the Library and until recently, I worked for nine years in the jewelry industry, specializing in jade.

I am forever grateful to the many wonderful people I worked under and with, Mrs. Ruth Rausen who always answered my calls, Mr. Robert Powers who listened to us, the many librarians I worked with in my younger days, and the many staff and chiefs in the Research Libraries. Each one of them marked a step in my life

WOL SUE LEE

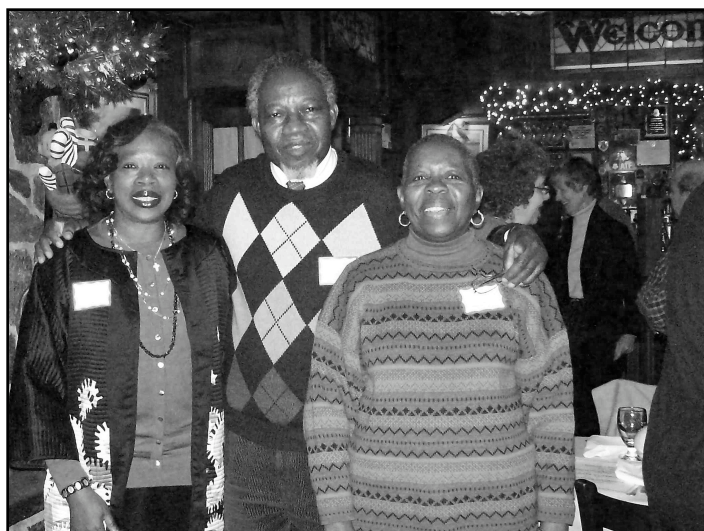
Our annual family spring vacation is, once again, in Park City, Utah. We will enjoy snowboarding, skiing, and the Sundance Film Festival for a week.

STEPHAN LIKOSKY

I have been writing several articles on themes found on early postcards, (?) yes which I collect. Also, I enjoy traveling very much and continuing to explore the city's neighborhoods. I do a lot of reading and some volunteer work with the LGBT Community Center.

MARCIA LOYD

I have made calls for the Association, recruiting members to join. I'm currently working with ReServe in the Children's Corner at the Department of Human Resources. My oldest grandson graduated from Beach Channel High School in June and will be attending college in the winter semester. It has been an interesting year, and I am enjoying the joys of retirement. I'm slowly preparing my baking business, Marcia'Sweets, as the holidays begin to creep up on us. Best to all.



ANN MOCK

On March 3, my husband and I became grandparents of Aidan Thomas Mock. I finally retired on August 28, 2009, after almost forty-four years. We took a cruise up north to Canada. We visited my cousin in Buffalo, and, in October, we are going to Pennsylvania and Illinois to see my husband's cousins.

PAT PARDO

I am volunteering at the Henry George School of Social Service Institute of Alternative Economics (a founding member), Kips Bay Players Theatre Group (co-founder), and Edgewater Cove, Inc. (Vice President).

I am very lucky to have worked during the NYPL administrations which were so open to creative and "free-spirited" staff. Their support and attitudes are what kept me at NYPL for almost thirty years.

JEAN PETERSON

I went to the Arts Festival in Newport, Rhode Island, and saw the gilded age mansions. I also traveled to San Francisco. I toured the wine country of Napa and Sonoma and saw redwoods in Muir Woods. In

September, I went to St. Thomas, the U.S. Virgin Islands, for a week of relaxing by the pool and going to the beach. I spent the holidays with my family in Pennsylvania.



BONNIE PHELPS

There is so much I want to enjoy, but I'm so tired right now. Maybe next time.

My memories of my stay at the NYPL are always filled with gratitude, even in the rough times. Why! Because if you let God, He'll lovingly bring us through! Love ☺

FRAN RABINOWITZ

For all of you who came to see my son Jonathan's play, *Franklin*, last spring, a heartfelt "thank you." My husband, Herb, and I hope everyone enjoyed this original play, written by Jonathan's friend, Josh Billig. We appreciate everyone's support for Jonathan, who not only produced, but also starred in the show as well. Jonathan and his co-producer, Tina Ward, have new projects for the coming year, a production of "Much Ado About Nothing" and an original comedy series on the web.

NANCY RANNIE

I've just retired, August 2009. I haven't begun any volunteering.

WINIFRED SALTUS

I enjoy travel. I am the Trip Coordinator for the Co-op City Chapter #4997 of the AARP.

BOB SINK

I left NYPL in 2001 to become Chief of Archive and Library Services at the Center for Jewish History. I retired from the Center mid-April. I have returned to an old research project focusing on NYPL Branch Librarians during the first fifty years of the Circulation Department, 1901-1950.

PATRICIA SMITH

I still enjoy gardening and, of course, reading. I belong to two "Red Hat Society" groups. I am active with my church. I have also started taking Tai Chi classes, good exercise for both body and mind—these are showing their age.

ZAHARA STESSEL, Ph.D

I had an audio interview together with my husband by Story Corps. The record will be kept at the Library of Congress.

SALLY LOU THOMPSON

I am now living in an assisted living home near Golden Valley where my cousin lives. Due to various falls, I am now confined to a motorized wheelchair. I miss New York City and world-wide traveling but am content with my new lifestyle. Ann Alexander continues to visit me when she can leave her ninety-nine year old mother.

DEB TREPP

I just finished renovating the house and am looking forward to seeing old friends soon.

WALTER TSANG

I hope to publish another book, but I don't know when!

VIRGINIA WARNER

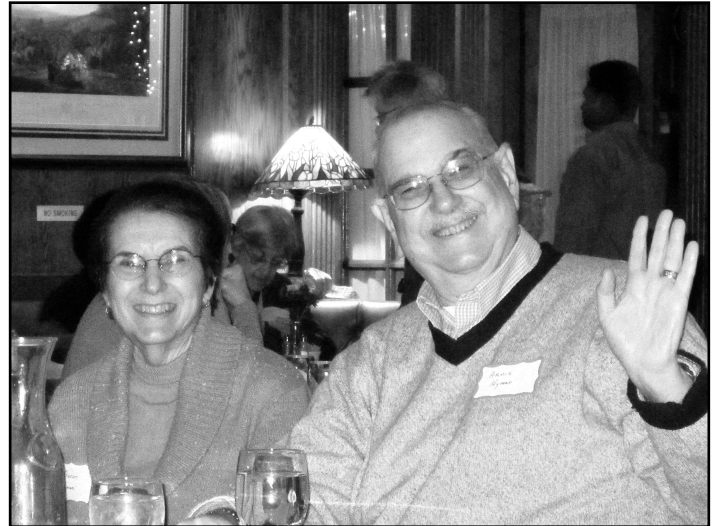
I'm looking forward to a nine day cruise to Bermuda and the Bahamas. This will be my first big adventure without a family member to accompany me since my shoulder replacement. I must have felt the same way my first day at St. Elizabeth's first grade class, nervous but happy. The Lunch Bunch is still meeting each month. We missed only once this winter due to the weather. Pretty good for this old white-haired group!

ARLINE WILSON

I'm volunteering for the New York State Long Term Care Ombudsman Program, advocating for residents in nursing homes. I'm also a Scrabble enthusiast and play in a weekly Scrabble group. Lastly, I'm still reading, now, however, exclusively on my Kindle.

NEW MEMBERS

Norma Y. Almeda
Corazon R. Bustamante
Ruth A. Carr
Miriam Castle
Cynthia Clark
Steven N. Cooper
Rosella Cory
Jennie Czarny
Martha Deephanphongs
Yolande P. Elysee
Janice Frank



Phyllis Hoffman
Galina Kusina
Marcia Osofsky
Pat Pardo
Joanne Rosario
Anne Seppala-Holtzman
Deborah Trepp
Beth Wladis
James Ye

SAD NEWS FROM THE DOARES FAMILY

We received the sad news from the Doares Family that Wade Doares, Juanita's husband, passed away of a heart attack on Wednesday, January 12, 2011, at the age of 85. He and Juanita, who were married in 1952 in St. Paul's Chapel on the Columbia University campus, would have been married 60 years this coming August. They have a devoted son, Bill.

Wade was born November 19, 1925, in McColl, South Carolina, the fifth of six children. He was the first male child of the family to finish High School. After WW II, Wade, who loved books and reading, studied Library Science at the University of South Carolina in Columbia. After graduating in 1949, he followed Juanita, his fiancée, to NYC where they



both received degrees in Library Service at Columbia University. At that time, Wade worked in Columbia's Chemistry Department Library, eventually becoming Librarian of the Graduate School of Journalism. Juanita had already started her career at The New York Public Library. Their son Bill was born in 1955.

Wade, a kind and gentle man with many interests and activities, eventually developed Cerebellar Ataxia, a serious disabling disease. Even with this disease, he continued to be a devoted father, husband, and friend. He and Juanita became active members of the National Ataxia Foundation through which they both have helped others cope with this disease.

Wade retired in 1988. When Juanita later followed him, she, along with a few other retirees, established our association. Wade encouraged them in their endeavors, and The New York Public Library Retirees Association came into existence (in 1993). Juanita became its first President, a position she held until April 2005.

Juanita and Bill may be reached at 212-666-5737, and cards may be sent to 401 West 118th Street, Apt. 3, New York, NY 10027.

PASSINGS

We honor the passings of the following New York Public Library staff members:

Patricia Ambrosino
Marion Hoos
Joseph Allen Jackson
James Kenefick
Michael Kipp
Joyce Ku
Thalia Pizzarello
Dorothy Faye Reiter
Adele Requena
John Slade
Laura Venturi
Catherine Wnek

EDITOR'S NOTE

Just a few photos chosen from the many photos taken at our meetings and tours appear in this newsletter. You can see many more photos, and photos in full color, on the Members Only website.

Please email your photos. All of them will be put up on the Members Only website.

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NYPLRA Website: www.nyplra.org Go to the Members Only page on this site for instructions for going to our password protected Members Only website.



Help John Peters

identify people in photos taken at Central Children's Room events. Go to the Members Only website and look at his album, NYPL People. You may solve a mystery.