

RC39 Vice President Judith Holmes, RC39 President Pete Herron, and RC39 Treasurer Joan Prymas at the NYSUT Retiree Contiguous E. D. 51-53 (At-large) Meeting, October 6-7, Albany.

NYS Comptroller Tom DiNapoli addressing the NYSUT Retiree Contiguous E. D. 51-53 (At-large) Meeting. Sole trustee of the NYSERS pension system and a board member of the State TRS, DiNapoli required no more introduction to earn a standing ovation from the 150 NYSUT retirees representing the contiguous election districts.

RC39 Officers Attend NYSUT Retirees Contiguous ED 51-53 (At-large) Meeting.

RC39 President Pete Herron, RC39 Vice President Judith Holmes, and RC39 Treasurer Joan Prymas joined about 150 other retirees at the October 6-7 NYSUT Retirees Contiguous ED 51-53 (At-large) Meeting. This two-day event was packed with plenary sessions, breakfast, lunch, and dinner work sessions, and workshops. This year there was only one resolution. It involved the concept of retirees paying NYSUT dues. Because of technical issues, this resolution was tabled.

Peter Savage, NYSUT Legislative Representative, gave an excellent presentation on the potential consequences of a New York State Constitutional Convention. See the January/February 2015 issue of the NYSUT RC39 newsletter article "Pandora's Box-Facts About a Constitutional Convention" by NYSUT Executive V. P. Andy Pollota. This newsletter and many other recent NYSUT RC39 newsletters can be found on the AFT/NYSUT RC39 website, <http://rc39.ny.aft.org/>. Steven Kramer of *Feldman, Monaco & Kramer, P. C.* gave a presentation "Keys to Estate Planning." Betsy Porter, *NYSUT Manager of Member Benefits*, Floyd Cameron, *NYSUT* (Continued on page 2.)

2017, Potential Year for the New York State Constitutional Convention

One of the great treasures of New York State is the Adirondack State Park. Its many lakes, streams, mountains, forests, wildlife, and so much more provides a natural wonderland for all of us to enjoy. Do you know that the Adirondack Park represents 85% of all state park forest reserves in the Eastern United States? That's hard to believe, but it is true.

The New York State Constitutional Convention prevents mining, fracturing, timbering, and other activities that will destroy the natural beauty of the park. There are those who only see the park as a place to extract its minerals and timber for obscene profits. A New York State Constitutional Convention will give them the chance to change the constitution so they can destroy the park as they make themselves extremely rich.

The question of whether to have a constitutional convention must go before the voters every 20 years (this will happen in 2017) and allows for wide modifications of the constitution, **including a full rewrite of the document.** If the voters approve holding the convention, three delegates per State Senate District and fifteen at-large delegates are elected at the next scheduled general election. **These delegates can include sitting members of the State Legislature, political party leaders, or other office holders.** The convention meets in Albany the following April for an unspecified duration, deliberates, and then publishes their suggested amendments. The proposed changes are then submitted to the voters, either individually or as a group, with another public referendum vote no sooner than six weeks after the adjournment of the convention.

You must tell your friends and relatives that this is one of the many reasons why voters must prevent a New York State Constitutional Convention in 2017.



MOVIES NOW AND THEN

By Ann Fey



There he is again, Al Pacino talking to himself in a mirror. Nobody's looking at him. He's alone, reciting lines from Shakespeare. He is Simon Axler, in Barry Levinson's *THE HUMBLER* (2014), based on the somewhat raunchy Philip Roth novel. Once an egotistical highly praised classical stage and film actor, he is now aging, isolated and unemployed, since a terrible public moment on-stage when he suddenly realized he couldn't do it anymore and leaped off. The once great actor can't act, his acclaimed talent gone "into thin air." He undergoes a voluntary stint in a psychiatric hospital, and he returns to bleakness at home.

A variety of characters affect his sad isolation. His wife, played by Dianne Weist with touches of that Law and Order District Attorney style, leaves him. The daughter of a couple of distant old actor friends, Poppee, played effectively by Greta Gerwig, visits him bringing their gift. She is a new teacher at a local college. They become involved in an extended relationship. She is gay, and her current partner is the college Dean who recently and generously hired her. She shifts from gay to bisexual and back and forth, accommodating his aging lifestyle and eagerly accepting his glamorous gifts of stylish clothing, jewels and upscale hairstyling, eventually leaving him. A woman who had befriended him in the psychiatric hospital persistently tries to hire him to murder her husband, who she believes molested their daughter. There is a visit from Poppee's former partner, who is now transgendered. There are wild phone calls and stalking by the Dean, who lurks outside his house. Not a good situation.

Fast forward: friends intervene, and Axler gets on the stage again. In the film's opening, talking to himself in the mirror, he had been backstage in a dressing room, applying make-up for his returning role. The story's ironic comedy, strangeness, choppy rhythms, changing moods, could have been his memories, or dreams, or imagination. Now we see him on-stage: King Lear. Can the great actor act again? Has he made his comeback? This is an ending to see.

The life view in *THE HUMBLER*, a filmic version of the somewhat raunchy novel, is essentially opposite the happier sort of naughty-nice themes in recent films about aging, where some friends, a reasonable bucket list, and maybe even a jaunt to Las Vegas could add a hint of consolation. Consolation does come to Pacino in his title role in the more recent release, *DANNY COLLINS* (2015). As an aged dissolute cliché pop rock performer, Danny is suffering deep depression. Although prosperous, he is artistically mediocre. But then, he emerges from his glum, selfish, superficial indulgent lifestyle to reconnect with the sweet sadness of his long absent and neglected family. All it took was the discovery that forty years ago, the legendary Beatle John Lennon had noticed his real artistic musical promise, written to him in a letter that got misdirected, and urged him to stay true to his art. A great musician had recognized his potential! It's as if he could have been a contender. He reconnects with his forty-year-old son and his daughter-in-law and their ADHD daughter, provides for them, overcomes the sadness of his artistic failure, reclaims his satisfaction with life, and enervates his popular performing career, as the social security crowd fills his auditorium shows. He has made his comeback. This is a good happy ending in a not so good film.

There is another film -- entertaining, sensitive, and successful -- that plays with some magic moments and treats the desire for the comeback, the reach to reclaim the achievement of younger years. It may have been unfortunately overlooked by some because a quick view of its title on the Now Playing list at the multiplex might wrongly suggest explosions and zapping weaponry, or worse—squawking cartoons or smiley egg-faces: it's *BIRDMAN* (2014). It parallels *THE HUMBLER* in basic story, and in some of the moods, but it is superior. It was shot entirely in New York City, and the settings as well as the elemental theme can feel familiar. Michael Keaton is appealingly sensitive and determined as Riggan, the actor reaching for his comeback. It opens with him, like Axler, approaching the backstage, and closes with an ending that is definitely something to talk about.

(From page 1.) **NYSUT Retirees Contiguous ED 51-53 (At-large) Meeting.**

Manager of Retiree & Social Services, and GERALYN O'REILLY, *NYSUT Retiree Services Specialist*, brought us up to date on Member Benefits and Retiree Services. Barry Kaufmann, *NYSARA President*, gave us a talk on the Alliance for Retireed Americans, an organization dedicated to the needs of retirees. Paul Webster, *NYSUT Director of Community Outreach*, gave us a short history of NYSUT's First Book Campaign and how it has developed into a program of providing free or inexpensive books to poor children, schools, and libraries.

RC39 Website

Check out RC39 website <http://rc39.ny.aft.org/> where you can read recent NYSUT RC39 newsletters, AFT and NYSUT news releases, and much more.

The ALEC Education Agenda

The American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) claims that its education mission is to "promote excellence in the nation's educational system," yet its "model" legislation advocates for policies that defund public services, distort the curriculum, and undercut our educators.

ALEC on Education:

ALEC supports funding "virtual" schools at the same per pupil rate as public brick-and-mortar schools; the difference in cost results in profits for ALEC's corporate members.

The Education Task Force has voted on over a dozen separate ALEC bills relating to vouchers and tuition tax credits for K- 12 education. The bills vary by whose financial interests they serve and by funding mechanism. Some of these bills introduced in states have been word-for-word copies.

ALEC's "Environmental Literacy Improvement Act" calls for curriculum to "provide a range of perspectives in a balanced manner" regardless of the scientific findings surrounding climate change.

ALEC's Academic Bill of Rights and Intellectual Diversity Act would prevent higher education faculty from using their professional judgment and create a chilling effect on what professors and students discuss.

ALEC has also adopted the Indiana Education "Reform" Package. It includes bills that advance online distance learning for K-12, that limit the collective bargaining rights of teachers, and that open schools up to "special management" if they underperform.

ALEC's A-Plus Literacy Act is based on special interest legislation peddled in Florida that grades schools based mainly on standardized test results.

**NYSUT Retiree Council 39
FINANCIAL STATEMENT
FOR THE TWELVE MONTHS ENDING JUNE 30, 2015**

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

Checking Account		\$16,118.27
TOTAL CASH ASSETS		\$16,118.27
NET ASSETS		\$16,116.27

STATEMENT OF REVENUE AND EXPENSES

REVENUE ACCOUNTS	ADOPTED BUDGET	ACTUAL TO-DATE	BUDGET REMAINING
Voluntary Participation Fees	\$2,000.00	\$2,345.00	\$ 345.00
Ads for Newsletters	920.00	520.00	(400.00)
TOTAL REVENUE	\$2,920.00	\$2,865.00	\$ (55.00)
EXPENSE ACCOUNT			
Supplies	\$ 10.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 10.00
Postage	50.00	38.32	11.68
Telephone	10.00	0.00	10.00
Travel for Officers/ Conference Expenses	500.00	306.06	193.94
Delegate Expenses (NYSUT RA)	1,800.00	1,036.01	763.99
Charitable Contributions	500.00	200.00	300.00
Dues	50.00	0.00	50.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$2,920.00	\$1,580.39	\$1,339.61
INCREASE (DECREASE) IN NET ASSETS	\$ 0.00	\$1,284.61	\$1,284.61

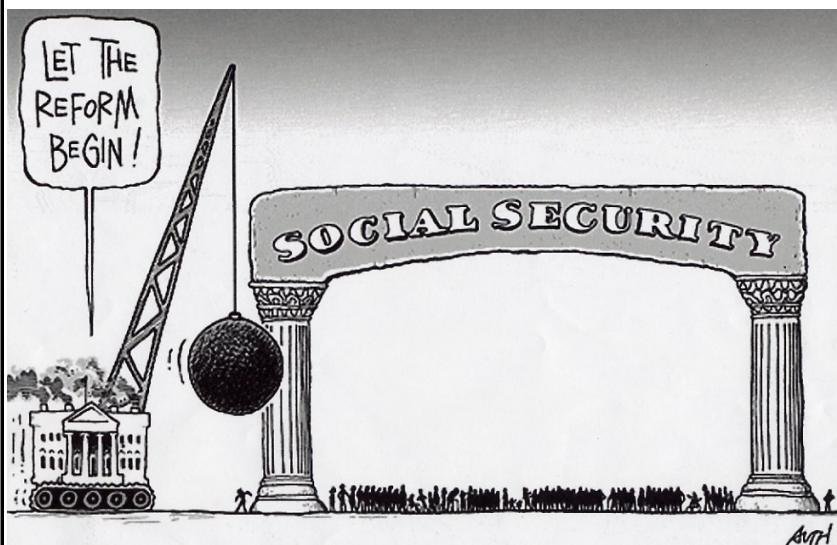
**NYSUT RC 39
Revenue and Expenses
Budget 2015-2016 Fiscal Year**

<u>Revenue Accounts</u>	<u>Adopted Budget</u>
Voluntary Participation Fees	\$2000.00
Newsletter and Website Advertisement Revenue	\$ 920.00
Total Revenue	\$2920.00
<u>Expense Accounts</u>	
Supplies	\$ 5.00
Postage	\$ 60.00
Telephone	\$ 5.00
Dues	\$ 50.00
Charitable Contributions	\$ 500.00
Travel for Officers/ Conference Expenses	\$ 500.00
Delegate Expenses (RA and AFT Conferences)	\$1800.00
Total Expenses	\$2920.00
Projected increases (decreases) in Net Assets	\$ (0.00)
This budget was adopted by a board resolution.	

Retiree Council 39 Board of Directors

- President, First NYSUT and AFT Delegate, Newsletter Editor and Webmaster:** Peter Herron
Vice President, NYSUT and AFT Delegate: Judith McFatter Holmes
Secretary, NYSUT and AFT Delegate: Corita Kong
Treasurer, NYSUT and AFT Alternate Delegate: Joan Prymas
Director-at-large: James V. Brennan
Director-at-large: George Wybenga

Send your comments, suggestions, and inquiries to NYSUT RC39Officers, 98 Rocky Point Landing Rd., Rocky Point, NY 11778 or rc39pete@optonline.net.



RC39 Newsletter is looking for comments, suggestions and articles from its members.

Send your comments, suggestions, or article to Peter Herron at rc39pete@optonline.net or mail to 98 Rocky Point Landing Road, Rocky Point, NY 11778. Your article will be published when space is available. RC39, NYSUT, and AFT news will be given priority.



Address Change

Do not let a new address keep you from receiving NYSUT RC39 newsletters. There are three ways to update your address. Contact NYSUT Member Records at 1-800-342-9810 ext. 6224. Send written changes to: NYSUT Member Records, 800 Troy-Schenectady Road, Latham, NY 12110, or e-mail changes to berrec@nysutmail.org. If you are a snowbird, give Member Records a few weeks notice to change its address records each way.

Have you paid your voluntary RC39 contribution for 2015-16?

If you have not sent in your voluntary NYSUT RC39 annual contribution, now is as good a time as ever. Just send your check along with the form below to the RC39 treasurer. It is your contributions that enable RC39 officers and delegates to represent you at NYSUT conferences and meetings.

Retiree Council 39 Voluntary 2015-16 Participation Fee form

Name _____ e-mail _____
Address _____ Phone (____) _____
City _____ State _____ Zip code _____
College retired from _____ Year of Retirement _____
Please check amount of your voluntary participation fee: \$25 _____ Other \$ _____
Send your check, made out to NYSUT RC39, along with this completed form to:
Ms. Joan Prymas, RC39 Treasurer, 141 Montgomery Street, Ilion, NY 13357