

**RC39 President, Secretary and Member-at-Large attend**

**NYSUT Retiree Contiguous Meeting**  
Corita Kong

Peter Herron, George Wybenga and I attended the NYSUT Retiree Contiguous E.D.51-53 (At-Large) Meeting on Oct 23-24, 2013, in Albany. The primary business of the meeting was to review, discuss and adopt the resolutions presented by the various retiree councils to NYSUT for consideration. The eleven adopted resolutions will be published in a future issue of the NYSUT journal for our perusal.

There were two workshops: one on computer safety for retirees and the other on Medicare update. The former stressed the importance of NOT providing our Social Security number or credit card/bank account info online, if avoidable. If unavoidable, be sure the website has the heading:"https" which indicates a secure site; without the "s", it is NOT secure. It's a good practice to delete emails from persons and organizations with whom/which we are unfamiliar; definitely do NOT click on links in such emails.

The second workshop introduced to us the Medicare Rights Center which is a national, not-for-profit consumer service organization that works to ensure access

to affordable health care for seniors and people with disabilities. We could contact the Center by calling 800-333-4114 or going online to "[www.medicareinteractive.org/teacher](http://www.medicareinteractive.org/teacher)."

There were speakers who updated us on some pending federal and state legislations that may impact us. Thomas DiNapoli, NY State Comptroller, assured us that our state's pension fund is financially strong, and he thinks the calls for pension "reforms" are unnecessary and may lead to "racing to the bottom". He also pointed out that 80% of retirees receiving NY pension remain in NY and thus contribute substantially to our state's economy; the pension payouts do not drain our state's finance.

My take-away from the meeting is that knowledge is indeed power, enabling us to distinguish between rumor and reality. It is ludicrous that there are people raging over "Obamacare" or "the Affordable Care Act" and not knowing that the two are one and the same.



President Peter Herron, Secretary Corita Kong and Member-at-large George Wybenga at the E.D. 51-53 Retiree Contiguous Meeting.

**Final Report of the 2013  
NYSUT Retiree  
Contiguous E.D. Meeting**

The final report of the NYSUT Retiree contiguous E.D. meeting can be obtained by going to the NYSUT/AFT RC39 website, <http://rc39.ny.aft.org/> home page. The report contains all the resolutions considered. One resolution was withdrawn by the proposer, eight approved by the meeting delegates and one forwarded for consideration.



Member-at-large George Wybenga, Secretary Corita Kong, Vice President Ann Smallen, Treasurer Joan Prymas, President Peter Herron, NYSUT Retiree Service Specialist Geralyn O'Reilly, NYSUT Retiree Service Manager Floyd Cameron at the RC39 Board of Directors meeting, NYSUT Headquarters, Latham, NY.

### Prymas and Herron attend SUNY Retirees Conference

As members of the SUNY Retirees Service Corps Advisory Committee RC39 Treasurer Joan Prymas and RC39 President Peter Herron participated in the SUNY Retirees Service Corps (RSC) third biennial SUNY Retirees Conference on November 20, 2013, which was held at the SUNY College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering, Albany, NY. Session highlights of this conference included the unveiling of the SUNY Retirees Network, an exciting new component of the SUNY Retirees Service Corps website designed to connect SUNY retirees via a secure online directory; promote online interaction among retirees; and connect interested retirees with volunteer opportunities. The Open SUNY session featured insights by a key member of the Chancellor's Online Education Advisory Group on what may become the largest online learning environment in the world and its potential impact on SUNY retirees. The Center for Excellence in Aging and Community Wellness session explored the organization's innovative online and in-person

## NYSUT Retiree Council 39 FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR THE TWELVE MONTHS ENDING JUNE 30, 2013

### STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

Checking Account	\$13,614.74
<b>TOTAL CASH ASSETS</b>	<b>13,614.74</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$13,614.74</b>

### STATEMENT OF REVENUE AND EXPENSES

REVENUE ACCOUNTS	ADOPTED BUDGET	ACTUAL TO-DATE	BUDGET REMAINING
Voluntary Participation Fees	\$1,800.00	\$2,333.00	\$ 533.00
Ads for Newsletters	1,000.00	1,320.00	320.00
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$2,800.00</b>	<b>\$3,653.00</b>	<b>\$ 853.00</b>
<b>EXPENSE ACCOUNT</b>			
Supplies	\$ 25.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 25.00
Postage	100.00	51.25	48.75
Telephone	25.00	0.00	25.00
Travel for Officers	600.00	0.00	600.00
Conference Expenses	250.00	0.00	250.00
Delegate Expenses (NYSUT RA)	1,800.00	1,543.50	256.50
Donation to AFT Disaster Relief Fund	0.00	200.00	(200.00)
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$2,800.00</b>	<b>\$1,794.75</b>	<b>\$ 1,005.25</b>
<b>INCREASE (DECREASE) IN NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 0.00</b>	<b>\$ 1,858.25</b>	<b>\$ 1,858.25</b>

health promotion programs available to seniors throughout the state as well as efforts to recruit volunteer leaders and participants. The NYS Office for the Aging Website session will look at the multitude of resources available on the OFA site itself and the links to numerous organizations that older New Yorkers may find valuable. SUNY Retirees and Vibrant Communities explored the role retirees can play in the Vibrant Communities initiative of **The Power of SUNY**, SUNY's current strategic plan. A more detailed report on this conference will be in the next issue of the RC39 newsletter.

RC39 board of directors considered this conference of such great importance to all SUNY retirees that it offered to pay the \$20 conference fee for any RC39 member who wished to attend. The notice of this offer was emailed to all members who gave RC39 their email address on the voluntary participation form.

### We have lost our friend and author of "Reading in Retirement," Dr. Charles Grippi

Dr. Charles Grippi died on October 1, 2013. Charlie was instrumental in the development of the NYSUT RC39 by-laws. Dr. Grippi played a major role in the formation of the Faculty Association of Suffolk Community College. For many years he served as the English department head. As department head and as a colleague he was a mentor to so many, students and faculty. He never hesitated in standing up for the rights of junior faculty members. Charlie will be remembered as a great human being. He enriched the lives of all those who were fortunate to know him.

### CMS announces major savings for Medicare beneficiaries

Part B premiums will see zero growth; billions of dollars are being saved in donut hole. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) said that health care reform efforts are eliciting significant out-of-pocket savings for Medicare beneficiaries, pointing to zero growth in 2014 Medicare Part B premiums and deductibles, and more than \$8 billion in cumulative savings in the prescription drug coverage gap known as the "donut hole." For the complete announcement go to the NYSUT/AFT RC39 website, <http://rc39.ny.aft.org/>, home page.



## LOOKING AT MOVIES ---NOW AND THEN

By Ann Fey

The ocean has often been an important setting for stories of adventure and misadventure in movies. Challenges come from the sea, and from the interaction and conflict of those that it confines together. We can think of Hitchcock's "Lifeboat," and "Poseidon Adventure" and of course "Titanic". Two of the most disturbing and involving current films (assuming no existing productions of any Carnival Cruise adventures), "Captain Phillips" and "All Is Lost" are outstanding works set on endangered ships in foreign oceans. Each is a story well told, centering on a single hero who undergoes overwhelming experiences. Both are beautifully cast and acted, so timely, so involving and yes, disturbing, and also in very important ways essentially different from each other.

"Captain Phillips" is an action/adventure recreation of a real event: an attack on a food-carrying Maersk Lines merchant ship by armed Somali pirates, who demand ransom for the Captain, an assertive, resourceful man, played by Tom Hanks. He is rescued by American courage, resourcefulness, and technological proficiency. (Obviously, he did not have to sign up on line for this protection.)

This audience-grabber is set on the ship Alabama, owned by Maersk, one of the world's largest shipping lines. We see ponderous opening sequences: professional camaraderie between the Captain and his crew, then possible problems, then probable attack. The story advances to power-hose weapons, forced boarding, and fearsome captivity, fraught with shouting, shooting, and hiding. Intensity peaks in a closed capsule lifeboat, a cramped pod, where the Captain, imprisoned by the pirates, reasons and plots and pleads for his life. His captors differ: one hateful and angry, one youthful – almost child-like, one characterized as strangely wise and personally powerful. There is tense conflict among the pirates.

The ending is exciting: rescue forces enter the story. Painfully tense and hysterical screaming lifeboat scenes are interspersed with silent dark ship silhouettes and dim technical rooms looming with the relative silence of short dialogue in deep voices of men in uniforms. The Captain will be rescued! The script reflects Phillips' memoir, "A Captain's Duty." His crew has reportedly brought law suits against his employer Maersk and against the captain himself. Perhaps the initial camaraderie was not quite as deep as the problems.

Maersk Shipping also appears in "All Is Lost", a deep study of an anonymous contemporary human being in isolation, played by Robert Redford, now 77, in an extraordinary performance. (If Redford's ocean experience recalls for the filmgoer any of Tom Hanks' performances, it would be when he was isolated in "Castaway." No consoling volleyballs here, however.) The main and only character is listed in the credits as "Our Man." His private sailboat, detailed with the niceties of middle-class pleasure-sailing, is damaged when it is crashed by a huge free-floating Maersk shipping container, piled high with crates stenciled with Chinese figures. Out of broken crates, pairs and pairs of children's sneakers fall into the sea, float, and sink. Our Man spends his next days in the intriguing labors and details of repairing, retrieving, redoing: efforts to ward off hunger, cold, thirst, and death. He experiences extreme challenge, hope, and disappointment. Technology has failed: radio didn't work, navigational electronic equipment fails, no radar, lifeboat weakens. He resourcefully and desperately condenses salt water using sunshine, manages to use a sextant and to read the stars and reads a map and rides the tides to get into the shipping lanes. Cargo ships come in sight, even near, and pass by, no humans visible, decks piled high with cargo, all ships labeled, ---yes, Maersk.

There is a surreal quality to the ending. The schools of wispy little bright fish dancing in graceful swirls under the lifeboat are replaced by darting predator sharks. Our Man's last reach towards a ship on the horizon, a gesture with a flame too fierce, sends him below water. He is still, arms akimbo, eyes closed. Seems like a long time. He looks dead. The end. Wait; is that a hand reaching down from above? Whose hand? Bright lights! Now he's alive! He's pushing upward! Is he really rescued? Now it ends.

The ending or lack of it, in this tale of Our Man brings up an almost allegorical possibility: the trials of Our Man reflecting the world challenges of Mankind. (Or Personkind.) Or was the movie running too long? Was a "you figure it out!" ending more box office friendly? Was a real rescue sequence over budget?

Outside theatres, after showings, the popular response of regular movie viewers about the ending seemed to be mostly "*Whatever!*" or "Too long already!" Captain Phillips' story cost \$55 million to produce. Our Man's cost \$9 million. It is likely that time will find "All Is Lost" ranked among the most significant films of the decade, and that "Captain Phillips" will go the way of the Titanic -- not the movie -- the ship.

### Looking forward to hearing from you.

Let us know what you think of Ann Fey's new column and your impression of the RC39 newsletter. We can best serve you if we know what you would like to see in your NYSUT RC39 newsletter. Send your comments, suggestions, etc. to [rc39pete@optonline.net](mailto:rc39pete@optonline.net).

### RC39 of Board of Directors Meet at NYSUT Headquarter

On October 25, the day after the Retiree Contiguous meeting, the RC39 Board of Directors met at the NYSUT Headquarter, Latham, New York. This was only the second time the RC39 board had a formal meeting. The board made an evaluation of current RC39 approaches to getting members involved and ways RC39 can better serve its members. All board members agreed that it is crucial to get members to realize that involvement of retirees is essential for the protection of pensions and retirement benefits. If retirees do not think it is worth their effort and time to protect what retirees have earned, no one else will take up the fight for them.

### Retiree Council 39 Board of Directors

**President, First NYSUT and AFT Delegate, Newsletter Editor and Webmaster:** Peter Herron

**Vice President, NYSUT and AFT Delegate:** Ann Smallen

**Secretary, NYSUT and AFT Delegate:** Corita Kong

**Treasurer, NYSUT and AFT Alternate Delegate:** Joan Prymas

**Director-at-large:** Frances Hilliard

**Director-at-large:** George Wybenga

Send your comments, suggestions, and inquiries to NYSUT RC39 Officers, 98 Rocky Point Landing Rd., Rocky Point, NY 11778 or [rc39pete@optonline.net](mailto: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](mailto: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, NY12110 or e-mail changes to [memberec@nysutmail.org](mailto:memberec@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 2014?**

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 2014 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