

## Here's to a Happy and Healthy New Year!

I hope all is well as we close out 2021 and look forward to 2022. It looks like we are turning the corner and getting ahead of the devastating COVID pandemic.

As I mentioned in my last article, the RC 39 BOD is committed to providing our retirees information and resources to help improve your retirement. There has been a lot of discussion regarding health insurance changes for retirees in NYC and a few other locals. I have attended several presentations by the Long Island Retiree Delegate Council (LIRDC) and one webinar discussing retiree health options. This presentation was presented by Barry A. Kaufman, President of the New York State Alliance for Retired Americans on October 12. Here is a link to the PowerPoint located on the AFT/NYSUT RC39 website BENEFITS page

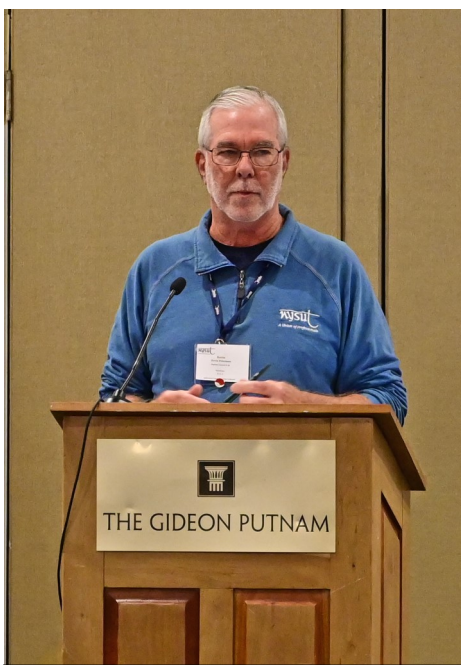
<http://rc39.ny.aft.org/>

It is a good primer on the subject.

RC 39 Treasurer, Joyce and I have had several zoom meetings with members of NY-SUT's Member Records Department to see how we can get a current list of all RC 39 retirees. The challenge is to get current information to NYSUT so they can create an accurate database. The information NY-SUT receives come from the in-service local. It seems some locals do submit current active members and retired members on an ongoing basis, but unfortunately, some do not. I've been attending the ED 39 Zoom meetings the past few months and making the case for supporting retirees. I mention RC 39 and the need for the community college locals to provide the necessary member information to NYSUT. We are trying to get a retiree email list from NYSUT so we can send you important information in a timely manner.

Joyce and I attended the statewide NYSUT Community College Conference in Saratoga Springs the first weekend in November and discussed RC 39. We want to make sure members nearing retirement know they are lifelong NYSUT members and RC 39 members as well. NYSUT does not assess retirees any dues and retiree councils do not get any funding (other than a possible grant) from NYSUT.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the many RC 39 members who voluntarily contribute to RC 39. Their contribution allows us to participate in conferences and



RC39 President Kevin Peterman at the statewide NYSUT Community College Conference in Saratoga Springs.

## Last Words

"Don't go yet. Don't leave," the father tells his son as he leaves the assisted living home.

When the son realizes these are the last words his father spoke to him, he writes about how his father changed and his own inclination to make a story out of everything.

And what is the story you and I are making of our lives? The last words David Sedaris heard from his father reminds me of the husband's last words to my friend as she slipped into bed after working the late shift — "Where were you? I waited up for you."

The father's and the husband's plaintive words are not the clear, bright command of Goethe's "More light!" Nor are they the practical last words Emily spoke, "I must go in — the fog is rising," or the mystical last words she wrote and her family carved on her stone: CALLED HOME

I'd like to go out singing, maybe "Swing low, sweet chariot, coming for to carry me home," like Harriet Tubman with her family gathered 'round. That would be an honor, to "pass on," as they say, conscious of the threshold I'm about to leave and enter.

But what about the casual goodbyes, not the deathbed drama, perhaps a phone call interrupted by a knock on the door? "Gotta go," he said, "I'll call you back," but didn't, and I thought he was brushing me off. Only years later, when I called to tell him that our friend had died, I learned it was death knocking at his door.

And you, dear one, while we still have words between us, let us speak patiently, speak as though they are our last words, and let there be no last words between us.

*Patti Tana*

Nassau Community College

attend the NYSUT Representative Assembly and AFT biannual convention. Our participation in these events gives us a voice and opportunities to propose resolutions important to retirees. Did you know that of the almost 650,000 NYSUT members, over 240,000 members are retirees?

There are several "retiree" resolutions being proposed for the April 2022 NYSUT RA in Albany. Since resolutions are still being proposed, I will have more on them in our next newsletter.

Remember, as a NYSUT retiree you are entitled to NYSUT's Member Benefits. Here is the link to Member Benefits -

<https://memberbenefits.nysut.org.>

Feel free to email me with any concerns, questions, or suggestions you may have.

On behalf of the RC 39 Board of Directors - safe travels and have a great Holiday Season and a Healthy and Happy New Year!

In Solidarity,

Kevin Peterman  
RC 39 President

### Retiree Council 39 Board of Directors

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Vice President, NYSUT and AFT Delegate, **Judy Wood**

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### RC39 Newsletter Addresses

98 Rocky Point Landing Road., Rocky Point, NY 11778, email: [rc39pete@optonline.net](mailto:rc39pete@optonline.net).

### RC39 Newsletter Committee

Newsletter Editor, **Pete Herron**:

Editorial Members, **Charles Clarke, Ann Fey, Joyce Gabriele, Frances Hilliard, , Sivia Kaye, Richard Macy, Kevin Peterman, Joan Prymas, Ann Smallen, Gerald Speal, Patti Tana, Judy Wood**

### RC39 Website

Webmaster, **Pete Herron**:

Website address: <http://rc39.ny.aft.org/>

### Get on the RC39 Email List

In order to receive RC39 notices and an early colored RC39 newsletters, email your name, the community college from which you retired, your email address, mailing address, and phone number to [rc39pete@optonline.net](mailto:rc39pete@optonline.net).

### 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 [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.

### RC39 Encourages its Members to Attend Regional Conferences

RC39 will pay a member's expenses, up to \$40, for attending a NYSUT regional retiree conference. Check the RC39 website for details.

### You need to be on the RC39 email address list to be informed.

The RC39 newsletter is published usually only five times during a year so timely warnings to members of imminent problems is not possible. On very rare occasions we have emailed members about a topic of immediate importance such as the recent notice on Medicare Enhancement plans threat to retirees' health insurance. If you have not received RC39 email warnings, email your name and email address (mailing address, phone number and college retired from are optional) to [rc39pete@optonline.net](mailto:rc39pete@optonline.net).



### RC39 Author Begins a New Mystery Series

RC39 member, Larry Epstein, does it again. This time not on Long Island but in Israel. *A Death in the Promised Land* is Larry Epstein's first in his new The Daniel Cresson Series.

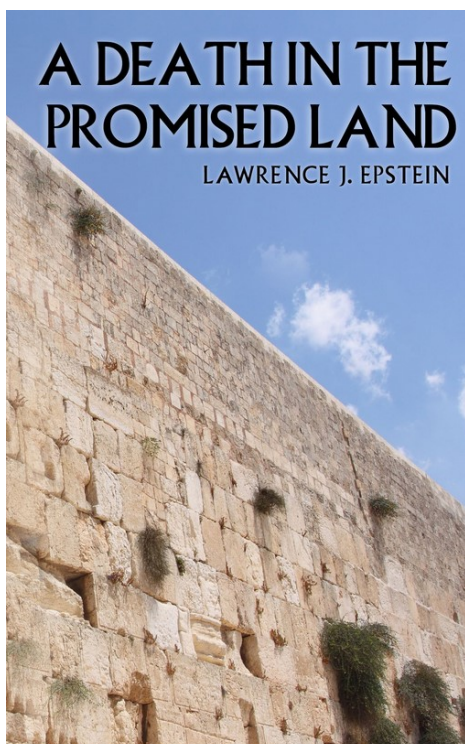
Here's what to expect. Danny Cresson, a young mystery writer, is sent on a mission to Israel by his dying mother. It is a trip that will change his life. He doesn't even arrive there before someone on the plane over is stabbed to death. He works on solving that killing.

Danny also meets an Israeli journalist who is determined to expand her talents, even as she guides Danny and falls in love with him.

Additionally, Danny learns secret information about his long-dead father and tries to atone for his father's death.

Filled with local sights and sounds, the novel follows Danny on an adventure that makes him question what his life has been and what it will be.

The Daniel Cresson Series follows several other mystery series by Larry. But Larry Epstein is not just an author of mysteries. He is the author of several biographies, histories, Judaism and so much more. To obtain a copy of *A Death in the Promised Land* and many of the other books by Larry Epstein go to the Amazon Kindle website.



## YOUR HEALTH CONNECTION

By Frances S. Hilliard, RN, MS  
Professor Emerita, Nassau Community College

In 1975, Dr. Herbert Benson wrote his ground-breaking book, *The Relaxation Response*. He brought to national attention an easy-to-do form of meditation that helped relieve stress and could be utilized as part of the medical management for hypertension and heart disease. Research has shown that individuals who bring forth the Relaxation Response on a regular basis are generally better able to cope with stressful situations and reduce the negative effects of stress on the body. There are several different types of meditation, but what all of them have in common is their ability to elicit the Relaxation Response. Researchers have found that people who meditate have lower levels of cholesterol, along with less incidence of diabetes, hypertension, stroke, and coronary artery disease.

The basic principles of any type of meditation are designed to bring forth the Relaxation response and include the following:

A quiet environment with as few distractions as possible

A "mental device," which can be a sound, word, or phrase which is to be repeated silently or aloud, or a fixed object. (This helps prevent your mind wandering.)

A passive attitude; a "let it happen" mindset in which you disregard random thoughts and redirect your attention by using your mental device.

A comfortable position with no undue muscle tension. (Avoid lying down, as this is often conducive to falling asleep.)

Should you decide to practice a form of meditation, it is advisable to initially have a meditation guide or instructor to help you get started. Relaxation, meditation, and guided imagery techniques are readily accessible through various websites, podcasts, and apps.

*This column is not intended as a substitute for medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. You are urged to seek the advice of a health care practitioner for any questions about your medical condition or treatment.*

### References

Benson-Henry Institute for Mind Body Medicine at Massachusetts General Hospital.

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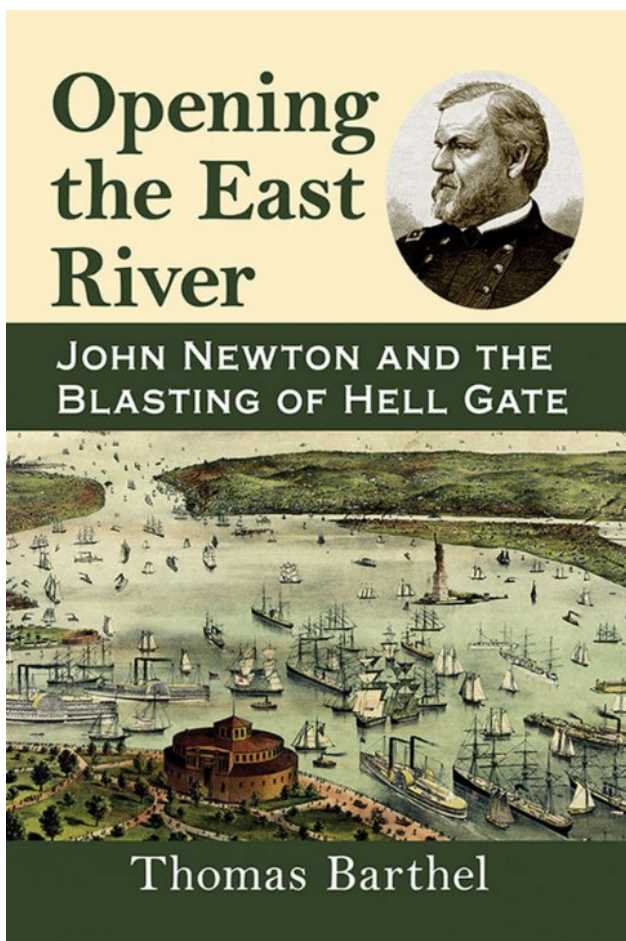
## RC39 Authors His Eleventh Book

Prof. Emeritus Tom Barthel from Herkimer CCC is proud to announce his 11th book. After writing baseball history, baseball biography and then the Civil War, he decided to write about some forgotten New York history, this time in the years 1866-1885. Called *Opening the East River: John Newton and the Blasting of Hell Gate*, the 236-page book features a bibliography and notes, an index, as well as his own gazetteer of new and forgotten places in and near the East River.

The press release reads as follows:

After the Civil War, the New York City's East River was a massive unsolved and dangerous navigation problem. A major waterway into and out of the harbor--where customs revenue equaled 42 percent of the U.S. Government's income--the river's many hindrances, centered around Hell Gate, including whirlpools, rocks, and reefs. These, combined with swirling currents and powerful tides, led to deaths, cargo losses, and destruction of vessels. Charged with clearing the river, General John Newton of the Army Corps of Engineers went to work with the most rudimentary tools for diving, mining, lighting, pumping, and drilling. His crews worked for 20 years, using a steam-drilling scow of his own design and a new and perilous explosive--nitroglycerine. In 1885, Newton destroyed the nine-acre Flood Rock with 282,730 pounds of high explosives. The demolition was watched by tens of thousands. This book chronicles the clearing of the East River and the ingenuity of the Army engineer whose work was praised by the National Academy of Sciences.

You can email Tom at [mel7torme@gmail.com](mailto:mel7torme@gmail.com).





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 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 Retiree Council 39, along with this completed form to:  
 Ms. Joyce Gabriele, RC39 Treasurer, 492 Everdell Avenue, West Islip, NY. 11795-4222

Your Member I.D. is on your NYSUT Membership Card. Lost your card? Don't know your I.D. number? Call NYSUT Membership during business hours at 1-800-342-9810.