



**September 2015      Issue 1  
Academic Year      2015-2016**

## **RETIREE NEWSLETTER**

**Professional Staff Congress  
Joan Greenbaum, Editor  
[psc-cuny.org/retirees](http://psc-cuny.org/retirees)**

### **OPENING CHAPTER MEETING, 1- 3 PM, TUESDAY, SEPT. 8<sup>th</sup>.**

Both the PSC and the New York State United Teachers (NYSUT), our 600,000 member state affiliate, have been in the forefront of the defense of public education in our state and city. The PSC begins a new semester with an intensified membership mobilization for a new contract. We'll have reports from the front lines at our inaugural meeting of the semester.

**Barbara Bowen** will open the program with her annual "State of the Union" report.

**Paul Pecorale**, Vice President of our state affiliate will give a "State of NYSUT" report. VP Pecorale will not only review NYSUT's higher education and retiree initiatives, but its important work defending K-12 public education in New York State.

We meet at 61 Broadway, 16<sup>th</sup> floor, in PSC Union Hall, 1 – 3 PM. Light refreshments will be served.

The chapter's Executive Committee meets at 10:30 AM in the PSC's Justice Room, 15<sup>th</sup> floor. Executive Committee meetings are open to all members.

**Note** that this meeting is on a Tuesday. **All other chapter meetings are the first Monday of the month.** Our two luncheons, in January and June, are the second Monday of the month.

#### **UPCOMING (save the dates):**

**Monday, October 5<sup>th</sup>:** State Senator Richard Gottfried on New York State Single Payer Healthcare legislation.



**Monday, November 2<sup>nd</sup>:** Organizing Around Climate Change. We are putting together a panel in anticipation of the United Nations Conference on Climate Change the following month.



**Monday, December 7<sup>th</sup>:** A panel and discussion exploring issues raised by Atul Gawande's book, *Being Mortal*. [This will be our first book-club-like chapter meeting; *Being Mortal* is not required, but you might enjoy it!]

**Monday, January 11<sup>th</sup> Luncheon:** We've invited CUNY alumni to speak who were veterans of student participation in the Mississippi Freedom Summer and the Selma marches. Luncheon is at John Jay College.

**All meetings are at the PSC's Union Hall / 16 Broadway/ 16th floor, unless otherwise noted.**

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**THE RETIREES CHAPTER DOES THE TOUR DE BRONX. SUNDAY, OCTOBER 25.** The Retirees Chapter will ride in the 20<sup>th</sup> annual

Tour de Bronx, a twenty-five mile ride through the borough's 61 neighborhoods. This is New York State's largest free bicycling event, beginning at the Grand Concourse and 161<sup>st</sup> Street (in the shadow of Yankee Stadium) and ending with a festival at the NY Botanical Garden.

This is a family friendly event for every age and skill level accompanied by marshals and NYPD escorts. And it's a wonderful opportunity for PSC retirees to bike and bond.



If you would like **to join us, please email chapter chair Bill Friedheim at [retirees@pscmail.org](mailto:retirees@pscmail.org).**

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#### **UPCOMING WALKING TOURS OF HISTORICAL PLACES:**

At last June's lunch meeting members suggested that in addition to our interesting meetings we organize some outside activities such as the Tour de Bronx and walking tours of historical places.

Come be an active member of the PSC Retirees by: suggesting a place; leading or helping organize a tour; or joining in the planning. Email Newsletter editor: **Joan Greenbaum at [joanbaum@ix.netcom.com](mailto:joanbaum@ix.netcom.com)**

## **HAPPY BIRTHDAY MEDICARE AND MEDICAID AT 50**

**On Wednesday, July 30th,** hundreds of events across the United States celebrated the 50th birthday of Medicare and Medicaid. In New York, a diverse crowd cutting across generations, communities, labor organizations, race and gender, packed the PSC Union Hall to salute the historic legislation passed in July 1965 as the Title XVIII (Medicare) and Title XIX (Medicaid) Amendments to the original 1935 Social Security Act.

Speaker after speaker not only talked about the urgency of defending these programs, but expanding them until all Americans are guaranteed affordable, public healthcare. Medicare and Medicaid already cover 125 million Americans and a recent poll found that an extraordinary rate of satisfaction, 95%, among Medicare users.

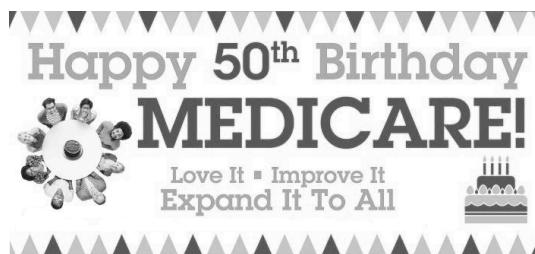
The day was full of personal stories, starting with Sharon Persinger, PSC Treasurer, who welcomed guests to our Union Hall and told how Medicare provided a lifeline in the 1960s to her ailing grandfather, a West Virginia coalminer. Others followed with moving testimonials about how Medicare and Medicaid, from asthma to heart attacks to mental health issues, delivered lifesaving care to family members.

Letitia James, the New York City Public Advocate, reminded the audience that the Title XVIII and XIX legislation played a pivotal role in

desegregating hospitals, particularly in the South.

A special panel, including our own John Hyland, Co-Chair of the PSC's Safety Net Working Group, led a discussion on organizing to protect, improve and expand Medicare and Medicaid.

To conclude, everybody in the hall sang a rousing chorus of happy birthday and dined on birthday cake.



## **RETIREES IN ACTION**

For updates about union activity please check the website.

<http://www.psc-cuny.org/retirees>

Annual retiree dues are \$71.00 for the period September through August. If you haven't joined yet, or didn't receive a dues bill by mail, please call the PSC Membership Department, at 212-354-1252 for a membership application.

The PSC-CUNY Retirees are known City and State-wide for activism around health-care, social security, and of course support for those 'retirees in training' on the campuses. We welcome your contributions and ideas, and newly released retiree energy!

If you currently receive this newsletter by U.S. mail and would rather receive it electronically, please email: [retirees@pscmail.org](mailto:retirees@pscmail.org).

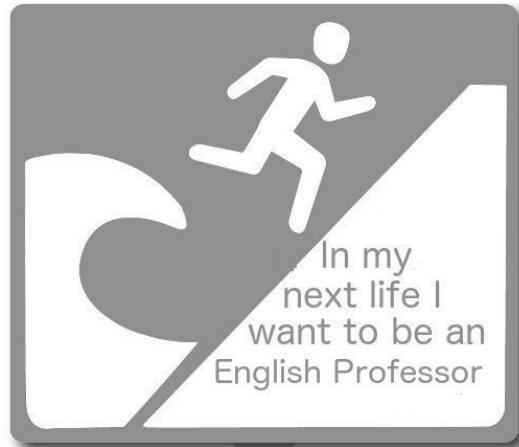
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## REDISCOVERING RETIREMENT: Our own stories about transition

*This is a continuing series. The following piece is by Gerhard Joseph, retired, Lehman College.*

In the closing page of his *Belief: A Memoir* (Savannah, GA, 2007), N. John (Jack) Hall speaks of his own happiness in the teaching profession by citing and agreeing with an oft-uttered sentence of mine, “In my next life, I want to be an English professor.”

But, for me, where? In a selective, top-rank private university or liberal arts college—say, Harvard or Swarthmore—or in the sort of place where I’ve spent most of my time here—Lehman College, CUNY in the Bronx? Well, given the fact that my own education was exclusively in public universities, that I’m a refugee from Nazi Germany and thus feel I owe this country something, and that many of the students I’ve taught are themselves immigrants, either documented or undocumented (and who knows or cares), it’s an easy choice: I’d opt for an urban university like CUNY.



Of course, it is a hypothetical—and if I come back at all, it’ll probably be as a snail or a sloth. --**Gerhard Joseph, June 2015**

[Update: *Joseph retired in August and is returning to Lehman to teach a course in the English Department*]

Send us your short story.

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On the following page, is a black and white reproduction of a framed plaque given to **Jack Judd** at our June luncheon in appreciation of the work he has done building retiree community, engagement and activism. Jack stepped down in June as editor of this newsletter.



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## RETIREES NEWSLETTER

Professional Staff  
Congress  
Jack Judd, Editor  
[psc-cuny.org/retirees](http://psc-cuny.org/retirees)

### Breaking News

## JACK JUDD STEPS DOWN AS NEWSLETTER EDITOR

*Honored at June 2015 Retiree Luncheon*



We owe a huge debt of gratitude to Jack, not only for his years as chair of the retirees chapter, but for his labor of love nurturing a newsletter that built retiree community, engagement and activism. Jack, thank you from the Retiree Chapter Executive Committee for setting the bar so high.