

The First Labor **D**

Happy Labor Day! We truly thank you for your service and dedication to the City of New York.

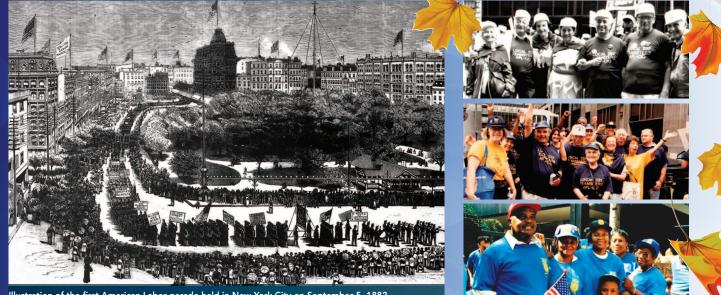


Illustration of the first American Labor parade held in New York City on September 5, 1882. More than 10,000 marched in solidarity.

Reconnecting with Retiree Division's Director: Julie Kobi

Tell us a little about yourself.

I am a licensed social worker by training. I have worked in the social work field for close to 20 years. I orignally started my social work career working for the Department for Children and Family Services in foster care and adoptions. It was a great learning experience, however, geriatrics was my area of interest and so I went into geriatrics and never looked back. In the field of geriatrics, I have been able to work in an array of settings from homebound elderly to a medical practice. I truly enjoy hearing the stories, some joyful and others heart-breaking, but I couldn't imagine myself in any other field of practice. I learn something new from Local 237 retirees every day.

What are your favorite things to do.

I will not pretend to say I like cooking but I do enjoy a great cooking show, like the great British Bake Off. Most of all, I enjoy spending time with my family and really good arts and crafts projects. My newest arts and crafts activity, with my children, is creating tie dye. Who knew there are so many things to tie dye.

What would you say are your hopes for the Retiree Division.

I have learned so much over two and a half years. The Retiree Division is truly a special place to work. The Retiree Division is a very large and robust division with over 11,200 retirees. My hopes are to continue building connections and engaging with retirees as much as possible. Programming classes, cultural events, and activities will continue as soon as it's safe to do so. The one thing I have learned from the pandemic is how resilient and adaptable we are, maybe not all at first, but over time. Retirees adventured with us, taking telephone classes, participating in a telephone support group or even joining an online meeting. I know this is not easy but I commend all of you for taking chances and trying something new. This takes dedication to the Local 237 Union and Retiree Division. My hopes are to continue these wonderful connections and explore new interests with you in the near future.







Local 237 Retiree Division * 212-807-0555 * retirees2@local237.org www.local237.org



by Gregory Floyd

President, Teamsters Local 237 and Vice President-at-Large on the General Board of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters

Wen though Ralph Chaplin wrote the song "Solidarity Forever" in 1915 for the Industrial Workers of World War I, its refrain is as relevant and important today as it was more than 100 years ago: "When the union's inspiration thru the worker's blood shall run, there can be no power greater anywhere beneath the sun, yet what force on earth is weaker than the feeble strength of one, but the union makes us strong. Solidarity forever, solidarity forever, solidarity forever, for the union makes us strong."

A show of union strength is traditionally demonstrated in New York City with a huge parade---the biggest in the nation---with thousands of marchers, wearing their union colors, carrying banners and proudly marching down Fifth Avenue to the beat of music blaring from their floats. Of course, this year's festivities, like last year, were markedly different from pre-pandemic years. Smaller, more local and virtual celebrations took their place. But, it was apparent that, although a parade can make a large public point, the acknowledgement that workers matter—

lu season is approaching, The Department

pandemic, flu vaccine is also especially im-

of Health also reports, during the COVID-19

portant for people at risk of severe illness from

COVID-19, including adults 65 years and older,

and anyone with underlying medical conditions.

This flu season is very different from the last few

seasons as it may be very difficult to differentiate.

Some COVID-19 and flu symptoms are similar.

Speak to your health care provider, as testing

RETIREE news&views

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Laborations

a message from the president Solidarity Must Be Forever

more specifically that union workers matterwas abundantly clear. Whatever the format, the sentiments of great advocates of labor unions were ever-present. Among them, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., President John F. Kennedy and even the Republican President, Dwight D. Eisenhower. President Eisenhower said that America was better off because of unions. Dr. King told us that "The labor movement did not diminish the strength of the nation but enlarged it. By raising the living standard of millions, labor miraculously created a market for industry and lifted the whole nation to undreamed levels of production. Those who attack labor forget these simple truths, but history remembers them." President Kennedy said: "Our labor unions are not narrow, self-seeking groups. They have raised wages, shortened hours and provided supplemental benefits. Through collective bargaining and grievance procedures, they have brought justice and democracy to the shop floor." President Eisenhower also commented that "Only a fool would try to deprive working men and women of the right to join the union of their choice."

But we know that, in these times, with the November elections looming, the impact of climate change being felt coast to coast, and a pandemic that still has us in its deadly grasp, parades and other fanfare are simply not enough. I recall telling members at an annual Teamster's Black Caucus conference that today, in America, with union membership on the decline, the risk of becoming an endangered species is very real. But, unlike pandas or dolphins, union members still

a message from the director

have opportunity and resources to fight back. For example, labor leaders in New York have made it crystal clear to our elected officials and candidates that unions built the middle class in America and just want to make sure that there will be a place in it for our own children. You can't fault us for that! And we should use every opportunity to remind our government leaders and those who wish to become one, that labor still has a powerful voice and millions of votes. That always gets their attention. And one more thing: In New York, there is a sense that whether you're in a public or private union, it doesn't matter, we're all in the same family. An assault on one is an assault on all of us. That same spirit was seen during a push to convene a New York State Constitutional Convention. It would have had a devastating effect on public sector pensions and other benefits the Constitution guaranteed. But the proposal was overwhelmingly defeated because all unions got together to defeat it. We also sought and received the help of non-union groups who saw the push to lessen the role of labor unions for what it really was: An assault on democracy perpetrated by the special interests of the well-funded corporate 1%.

So, in the aftermath of the Labor Day and any commemorations that took place, the message for all of us remains clear: Walking and talking on behalf of our union brothers and sisters is essential but must be on-going and not confined to one special day to fight off extinction, or we may suffer the fate of the once powerful T-Rex. And extinction is forever, but so is solidarity.



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BROTHERHOOD 95

Alliance Retired

by Julie Kobi LMSW Director of the Retiree Division

Disease Control (CDC), people 65 years and older are at greater risk of developing serious flu complications compared with young, healthy adults. The increased risks are due to changes in older adults' immune systems. The flu vaccine provides an additional layer of support. Per the CDC, flu vaccines are updated each season to keep up with changing viruses. Also, immunity changes over a year, so annual vaccination is needed to ensure the best possible protection against flu. September and October are generally good times to be vaccinated for people 65 years and older.

may be necessary. According to the Centers For

Here is some information from Geriatrician's through Mount Sinai Hospital:

1. Why get vaccinated?

Flu is a contagious disease which can be dangerous for some people. It can cause fever, chills, sore throat, muscle aches, fatigue and cough.

Patients older than 65, infants, and pregnant women are at greatest risk for flu complications. Pneumonia, bronchitis, and sinus infections are some of the complications. Influenza vaccine can prevent the flu. Each year, thousands of people in the United States die from the flu and many are hospitalized.

2. What is the flu vaccine?

Vaccines can prevent certain serious or deadly infections. The flu vaccine can keep you from getting sick with the flu. 3. Who should get the flu vaccine and when?

All people age 6 months or older should get the flu vaccine every year. In the United States, it is best to get the vaccine by October, before the winter season begins. It takes about 2 weeks for protection to develop after vaccination. **4. Can the influenza vaccine cause the flu?** Influenza vaccine does not cause flu. **5. Why should I get the flu vaccine?**

Getting the flu vaccine can keep you from getting sick. Also, it helps those around you not to get sick. If you have been vaccinated but got the flu, the vaccine can also keep you from getting severely ill or even dying.

6. What side effects does the flu vaccine cause?

Often the flu vaccine does not cause side effects. Some people can report mild swelling or soreness where you got the shot, mild fever, and mild rash.

Information provided above is for informational purposes only. Please speak to your health care provider about the Flu and COVID- 19 vaccines.

For information on the Flu Vaccine please visit https://www.cdc.gov/flu/highrisk/65over.html

For more information about COVID-19 Virus and vaccines available please visit the CDC website www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/ (*Please note COVID-19 information is continually updating. Please check the CDC website for the most updated information.)

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Important updates about the new NYC Medicare Advantage Plan Program

he implementation of the Medicare Advantage Plan of New York is now on hold as a result of a Court order issued on October 21, 2021. The Court ordered that the Alliance and the City are prohibited from enforcing the October 31,2021 deadline for filing an application for opting-out of the Medicare Advantage Plan. The Alliance and the City are now developing a new implementation timeline. We suggest that you delay filing an opt-out form until the new deadlines are announced.

We will keep you informed of new developments as soon as possible. Please be sure to check the local 237 website regularly for updates at <u>https://local237.org/retirees</u>

Actualizaciones importantes sobre el nuevo programa NYC Medicare Advantage Plan

La implementación del Plan Medicare Advantage de Nueva York ahora está en suspendido como resultado de una orden judicial emitida el 21 de octubre de 2021, que ordenó que Alliance y la Ciudad tienen prohibido hacer cumplir la fecha límite del 31 de octubre de 2021 para presentar una Solicitud de exclusión voluntaria del Plan Medicare Advantage. La Alliance y la Ciudad ahora están desarrollando una nueva fecha para la implementación. Le sugerimos que retrase la presentación de un formulario de exclusión voluntaria hasta que se anuncien las nuevas fechas límite.

Les mantendremos informados de cualquier cambio lo antes posible. Asegúrese de visitar el sitio web local de 237 con regularidad para obtener actualizaciones en <u>https://local237.org/retirees</u>



Veterans Message

by Lynn Johnson

US Department of Veterans Affairs, VA NY Harbor Healthcare System Outreach Specialist, VA Work Study Supervisor and the VA NY Harbor Minority Veteran Coordinator.

Fall 2021: Veterans and their families are still dealing with COVID, the variants and its effects. VA is here for IBT Local 237 Veterans and families to offer guidance.

The Department of Veterans Affairs is available with resources to assist with quality of life issues-housing, health, home health aide, mental health, unemployment, and burial benefits, etc.

If you served in the United States Military in wartime or in peacetime and possess an honorable or general under honorable DD-214 or DD-215 Discharge papers, let the US Department of Veteran Affairs recognize your service by offering you consultation at VA, either in-person or via virtual platform, to help you apply for benefits and services.

Services you've earned may include VA Healthcare, Home Loan Certificate, GIBILL Educational Benefits, Military Injury-Compensation, Burial Benefits for the Veteran and Spouse, Homeless Services, Mental Health Benefits, Justice-Involved Support, Caregiver Program, and a host of ancillary services.

Interested in finding out if you qualify for VA benefits as a Local 237 Veteran?

Contact your local NYC VA Outreach Specialist Lyn.Johnson2@va.gov or call (212) 686-7500 ext. 4218 to speak directly with Mr. Johnson.



Grieving for Our Beloved Pets

by Luz Nieves-Carty MPA

Assistant to the Director, Retiree Division

Pets fill our lives with joy, companionship, unconditional love, and opportunities to stay active. Whether it's a dog, cat, parrot or turtle, pets become an important part of our lives and family. This past year, the world experienced a loss of lives of a heartbreaking nature. Mental health specialists assisted people with coping skills as they mourned. However, according to Psychology Today, research shows "that grieving the death of our companion animals can be just as painful, if not more than, grieving the loss of a family member or friend". Grieving is a personal experience that is influenced by our beliefs, society, and culture. People living in the same house may each grieve over a pet very differently.

Social Worker, Adam Clark, a writer for Psychology Today magazine, states, "our grief is an expression of the love we have felt, the pain of loss and the process of having to reintegrate our life into what it will look like with the "absence" of our pet." He shares the following 7 steps to work through grief.

1. Set aside the time to grieve in your own way and release your emotions.

Make time for yourself to grieve. Life is busy but it's important to let yourself feel the emotions. It can be easy to bury our pain, as we are distracted with our daily activities. Make time each day to grieve and to experience your emotions, fully. Otherwise, you might find yourself stuffing your emotions which can cause more pain down the road.

2. Reflect upon the life shared between yourself and your beloved pet.

Make time to reflect on the life you shared with your pet. This focused reflection can be either through writing, art, or whatever form of expression brings you comfort. In addition to the pain, reflect on the positive memories of your pet. This process transforms the feelings of pain to gratitude.

3. Make sure you continue to meet your basic needs

This step sounds easy, but the pain and guilt can keep you from taking care of yourself. Make sure you eat healthy foods, stay active and get plenty of rest.

4. Choose a calming practice and use it frequently.

The loss of a pet can be very frustrating and painful, especially as we live in a crazy, busy world. Prayer, meditation, breathing exercises, mindful eating and other tools can help release tension. Choose what you feel comfortable with and practice it every day.

5. Maintain routines with your living animals as best you can.

If you have other pets still alive, continue familiar routines. Animals grieve as humans do. They thrive on routines and structure. While you're grieving, your living pets are also experiencing the loss and absence of your pet and their companion. Try to maintain walking routines and feeding schedules as not to disrupt their daily routines. This allows a sense of structure and familiarity, although the first few times can be painful.

6. Memorialize the memory and love of your pet.

Sometimes we don't get to say "goodbye" to our pets. This leaves us with a big void in our hearts. Memorializing them helps with closure. It can be funeral, cremation, writing a letter, box of the pet's items, imprints of paws, etc. There is no wrong way to memorialize the wonderful life that was shared.

7. Don't hesitate to seek support from understanding friends or relatives.

Grieving is a process that comes from within. However, for some people it can be overwhelming, and unbearable. It's important to recognize when you need support during your grief process. Call a friend and go for a walk or get a cup of coffee. There are also professionals that can help through the pain and anxieties of losing your pet.

AMERICAN HUMANE ASSOCIATION

Pet loss resources and traumatic loss advice for children, adults, and teachers. ASPCA Pet Loss Hotline 877-474-3310

CORNELL UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF VETERINARY MEDICINE

607-253-3932 Pet Loss Support Hotline hours: 6 to 9 p.m. Eastern Time, every Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday.

ANIMAL MEDICAL CENTER

Support group meets every other Tuesday from 6:15 to 8:15 p.m. Contact 212-838-8100 for more information.

Losing a pet hurts but there is help. You're not alone. Honor your pet by properly mourning and taking care of yourself. \blacksquare



Tres temas para octubre

Por Néstor Murray-Irizarry

historiador y gestor cultural

La historia tiene dos grandes expresiones o vertientes: la historia oral o la historia documental. Hoy me voy a referir a la primera.

Toda organización de gran prestigio y larga vida, como lo es la International Brotherhood of Teamsters Local 237, DEBE recopilar su historia. Es necesario entender que la historia no es un solo un manojo de cientos de datos reunidos en un libro o almacenados en una computadora. NÓ, es algo más complicado. La HISTO-RIA es una narración o exposición de acontecimientos pasados y memorables. Pero, memorables para quienes, claro, para los unionados; y quien los narra, claro, los unionados, que son los que determinan los sucesos mas importantes que les ocurrieron durante su desempeño como trabajadores activos en la Local 237; o sea, HIS-TORIAR se refiere a narrar o escribir un suceso real de forma ordenada y detallada. Por eso es que las entrevistas abiertas que se le hacen a un trabajador tienen una secuencia y un orden que ayuden a que tanto el entrevistador como el entrevistado produzcan un documento de gran valor para todos. Cada miembro de la Local 237 tiene su propia historia que unida a la totalidad de sus experiencias forman su original cultura. La suma de todas las experiencias de todo el liderato, funcionarios y trabajadores de la Local 237 es su gran historia. Por humilde que usted crea que es su aportación a la historia de su Local 237 no se sienta muy limitado o tímido en participar en esta gran aventura cultural. Llame ahora mismo a Julie Kobi y comuníquele que usted también quiere ser parte del Proyecto de la HISTORIA ÓRAL que con tanto amor llevo a cabo Nancy B. True y su gran equipo de Trabajo.

II Nancy B. True, un año después

Durante el mes de septiembre de 2021 la muy bien recordada y especial ser humano Nancy B. True, hace un año, nos dejó físicamente, pero nos legó espiritualmente un mosaico hermoso de experiencias que acumulamos en el corazón. Para las personas que la conocieron saben de sus especiales deferencias, justicia social, profundo respeto por los miembros de la Local 237 particularmente por los jubilados de nuestra Unión. Sirva su ejemplo y sus gratos recuerdos como una gran inspiración para servir con pasión y orgullo a su patria y a su Local 237.

III Susan Milisits, nueva jubilada

Conocí a Susan Milisits en las oficinas de los jubilados de la Local 237, hace más de cinco años. Siempre me llamó la atención su gran sentido de responsabilidad su incansable trabajo y su gran compromiso con la Local 237. Su gran simpatía y su gran don de gente- elegante y buena persona- hacen de Susan un tremendo ser humano. Hoy lamentablemente, para los que trabajan bajo su liderato, se jubila de nuestra Local 237.Claro, para Susan es muy agradable pensar en los cientos de actividades que puede realizar como parte de su jubilación. Siempre nos alegramos de sus triunfos. Esperamos que, en su jubilación, su camino siempre este lleno de muchas rosas.

Para conocer un poco más de Susan le enviamos, a través de Julie Kobi, una serie de preguntas que ella contesto y que yo aquí público:

¿Dónde nació? Crecí en Brooklyn NYC

¿Qué estudió?

Éstudié Trabajo Social en la Escuela de Trabajo Social de la Universidad de Columbia en NYC.

¿Cuáles eran sus aspiraciones, mientras estudiaba, en su vida futura?

Inicialmente pensé que quería trabajar en algún tipo de Programa de Asistencia al Empleado, pero luego tuve una pasantía en Geriatría. Este *instership* realmente cambió o moldeó mi trayectoria profesional.

¿Tuvo hijos? ¿Cómo se llaman?

Tengo una hija de 23 años. Su nombre es Lily. Vive en Washington DC.

¿Cuáles fueron sus primeros trabajos?

Comencé a trabajar para el Sindicato Internacional de Trabajadores de la Confección de Damas (ILGWU) Allí trabajé como trabajadora social durante siete años antes de llegar a la Local 237.

¿Cuándo inició su trabajo en la unión?

Comencé a trabajar para Teamsters Local 237 en 2000.

¿Cuáles han sido sus logros?

Comencé mi carrera en el Local 237 como coordinadora de asistencia para jubilados, convirtiéndome en uno de los codirectores. Pude crear e implementar programas para jubilados del local 237. Realmente disfruté creando la necesaria programación. La mayor parte de la programación que ayudé a desarrollar todavía se usa.

¿Qué espera hacer durante su retiro?

En la jubilación me gustaría viajar un poco. Siempre me ha gustado la fotografía. Me gustaría tomar clases de fotografía e italiano.

Buena suerte. NMI

Welcome aboard Elaine



Local 237's Retiree Division welcomes Elaine Williams to the staff as the new Assistant Director. Elaine has a long and distinguished career working with older adults with a focus on homebound elderly, most recently in Mount Sinai primary care. Welcome Elaine!



October is National Breast Cancer Awareness Month. According to the Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. Breast Cancer is one of the most common kinds of cancer in women after skin cancer. About 1 in 8 women born today in the United States will get breast cancer at some point. The good news is that most women can survive breast cancer if it's found and treated early.

Big Changes to FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program



by Mary E. Sheridan, Esq. Director of Local 237 Legal Services Plan

The Federal Government created the National Flood Insurance Program in 1968. Private insurers were either not providing flood insurance or charging exorbitant prices forcing the Federal Government to step in to provide protection for millions of Americans. If a homeowner has a federally insured mortgage, they are required to have flood insurance if the property is located in the Special Flood Hazard area. Approximately 5 million homes across the United States are covered by National Flood Insurance.

The cost of flood insurance can be quite expensive and the Federal program was designed to provide affordable coverage for homeowners. One criticism of the pricing, however, has been that the insurance rates on million dollar homes are the same as those worth far less.

How will the first big revision in FEMA pricing affect homeowners? Well, it depends. Although many will see price increases on their insurance premiums, plenty will see lower prices. The overhaul of the Program is supposed to provide greater equity by accurately assessing a property's unique flood risk. The Program will now take into consideration not only the replacement value of the property, but also the type of flood risk – i.e., from rainfall or coastal flooding – and how close the property is to the flooding source. Probably the biggest change in the program is how the Program will look at climate change models to assess future risks from natural disasters.

Reliance on flood zone mapping alone to show risk does not allow for each property's unique risks. Considering unique risks of a home will result in a more equitable outcome, according to FEMA. Yet looking at climate change models could change flood risks that certainly might result in higher premiums for some but lower for others. If your policy is set to renew in October, you will have the new rates. If later, then you won't see any changes until next year. Additionally, there are limits on annual rate increases which should prevent a huge surge in pricing. Call your flood insurer and request information on rate changes.

The FEMA flood zone maps are also going to be updated and currently are set to be released in 2024. If you want to check on your property's current flood zone, you can go to msc.fema.gov and input your address. You do not need to be in a flood hazard zone to purchase flood insurance and you can always check on rates with private insurers too.

Feel free to call your Legal Services Plan at (212) 924-1220.



The Risks of Fall, What to do and How to Prevent Falls

by Edith Johnston, LCSW

Assistant Director, Retiree Division

A couple of years ago I was walking to work and had a bad fall, and more than the physical pain in my body, I felt a sense of shame. I did not do anything wrong: The sidewalk was slippery; the weather was cold; and I was rushing to get to the car. I did not break anything. I was lucky, and the experience made me think and reflect about how a small incident can become a life-changing one.

In my experience as a social worker, I have met many people who have become homebound as the result of a fall. Years ago, I met a couple who were both retired, active, engaged in their community, and with a good support network. They traveled often to visit their grandchildren upstate. According to the wife, one day her husband slipped on the sidewalk and hit his head on the concrete. He was taken to the emergency room and was never able to walk again. Their life changed in an instant. The wife became the main caregiver, but by her own account, it was hard physically, emotionally, and financially. I counseled the couple for months. The wife became overwhelmed with her caregiving responsibilities, and the husband was angry and resentful because all their plans had to change. Before the accident, he was very independent and now he had to depend on his wife and home attendants for all his activities of daily living (ADL).

The case I described above is one of many I have witnessed and a worst-case scenario, a fall, can happen to anyone at any age, but the older you are the worse it can be. As per the Centers for Disease Control, "Falls are common and costly, especially among Americans age 65 and older. But falls are preventable and do not have to be an inevitable part of aging. Every second of every day, an older adult (age 65 +) suffers a fall in the U.S.—making falls the leading cause of injury and injury death in this age group. One out of four older adults will fall each year in the United States, making falls a public health concern, particularly among the aging population".

Today I would like to offer some tips that can help prevent falls:

- 1. Speak with your doctor. You can discuss with your doctor your risks and he/she can offer you some very useful advice. Ask about your medications, since some medications can put you at a higher risk for falls.
- 2. Keep moving. Consult with your doctor about activities. Walking, water aerobics, and taichi are activities that can reduce the risk of falls.
- 3. Wear sensible shoes, consider changing your high heels, slippers, and flip flops for sturdy, fitted, walking shoes.
- 4. Remove hazards from your space. For example, boxes, newspapers and magazines, extension cords, and area carpets can become fall hazards. Make sure your walking areas are clear. Clean any spills immediately to prevent forgetting and slipping on it.
- 5. Light your living spaces well. It's important that you see well in the areas where you walk regularly.
- 6. Use assistance devices if necessary and recommended by your doctor: handrails for the stairways, grab bars for the shower or tub, a cane, or a walker. If necessary, ask your doctor for a referral to an occupational therapist.



on a personal note... In Memoriam



To the entire family of **Irving Goldberg**, retired from the NYC Housing Authority, who passed on 7/14/2021, we extend our deepest sympathies. (*Correction: Date of passing*)

To the family of HHC retiree **Thomas Matteo**, who passed on 4/22/21, we extend our heartfelt sympathies.







Congratulations to new retiree **Adalberto Espinal**, retired from New York City Housing Authority. Mr. Espinal was presented with a retirement plaque by Business Agent **Kenneth Franco**.

RETIREE news&views

216 West 14th Street New York, NY 10011





SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2021



PLEASE BE SURE TO CONTACT THE UNION IF YOUR PHONE NUMBER OR ADDRESS HAS CHANGED.

In addition to notifying the union, please contact the Social Security Administration, your pension system, and the Office of Labor Relations. You do not want to miss out on important information.



Congratulations to Retiree **Miguel Matos**, whose son Miguel and wife Rebecca welcomed baby girl Alexandra Karyna.

PERIODICALS POSTAGE PAID AT NEW YORK, NY

<image>

SEND PHOTOS, STORIES, FUN RECIPES, SHARE SPECIAL OCCASIONS/EVENTS OR A NEW HOBBY YOU WANT TO SHARE.

EMAIL: RETIREES2@LOCAL237.ORG OR CALL: 212-807-0555