

LOCAL 237 NEWSLINE

Vol. 54, No. 3

Fall 2020



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Dear Member:

Flowers are no longer in bloom. The leaves are falling to the ground. And although the season may have changed, the horrors and hardships of the pandemic crisis have not changed. Its brutality continues to cost lives and livelihoods. It robs children of learning and playing with their friends. It instills a sense of fear and prohibits many from receiving needed medical care. The pandemic has placed hunger, homelessness, and hopelessness in the spotlight in a way that we have not seen for decades in our nation. It has also exposed the raw nerve of racial disparity which many thought—or hoped or pretended—was in America's rearview mirror. Clearly, it is not.

The cause of all of this excessive and on-going human suffering is complex and partisan and the topic of many TV "talking heads", political pundits, elected officials, health care experts, and media gurus—each with a "blame-game" hypothesis they are eager to share. Despite differing views, there is, however, a general consensus: national leadership is lacking.

But even without that leadership, there is one place that does shine through... where decisive, swift and compassionate action to help others was on display from the onset of his horrendous assault on our population—and continues to be evident: The American union workforce. Especially, municipal workers. Our members at Local 237. They are considered essential workers because their work is vital to everyone's health and well-being. They make daily life possible. They come to work despite the fact, that although seven months into this crisis, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has yet to put into place mandatory safety standards and guidelines. But, to keep this in proper perspective and according to a recent Daily News report, 90% of American workers are not even represented by a union. And, essential workers, nationwide, earn less than \$20 per hour. Plus, Black workers are twice as likely to be punished if they complain about safety conditions. This begs the question: What, if anything, has made up for this deficit? Historically, unions have been at the forefront of protecting working families in times of crisis and in more normal times. Today's fight is for PPE and heroes' compensation. The examples of labor's victories are everywhere. In New York City, School Safety Agents, who long suffered pay disparity with titles performing similar functions, won an historic settlement in a gender-based class action lawsuit against the City of New York brought by Local 237. We argued that it was no coincidence that 70% of SSAs are women—largely Blacks and Latinas—and about 70% of the higher paid workers are male. Over the four years of the litigation, Local 237 pulled out all stops, with countless rallies and many high-profile supporters, including Hazel Dukes, the President of the New York State Chapter of the NAACP and Sonia Ossorio, President of the NYC Chapter of NOW. One rally featured Lilly Ledbetter. Ledbetter, an Alabama resident and area manager for Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co.'s Gadsden plant, became the face of the equal pay for equal work movement when she filed a sex discrimination lawsuit against Goodyear in 1998 following her retirement and months after an anonymous colleague slipped her a note indicating that she was being paid less than her male colleagues. The case made its way to the U.S. Supreme Court, where in 2006 the court ruled in a 5-4 decision against Ledbetter because she did not file her suit within 180 days of her first paycheck. Ledbetter—who held a special place in Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg's heart and, in a rare move, Justice Ginsburg read aloud her forceful dissenting opinion in the case, saying the majority ordered a "cramped interpretation" of the 180-day rule by deciding that each paycheck Ledbetter received wiped the slate clean for the discriminatory conduct. In her dissent, Ginsburg also told Congress, "the ball is in your court" to change the law and prevent other Lilly Ledbetters. Within 18 months, a bipartisan Congress passed the Lilly Ledbetter Act—the first piece of legislation signed by President Obama, who called Ginsburg, "a warrior for gender equality who inspired the generations who followed her, from the tiniest trick-or-treaters to law students burning the midnight oil to the most powerful leaders in the land." The recently deceased Justice Ginsburg was a trailblazer, in both life and death—with 45 years fighting for equal justice that included 483 decisions, and who was the first woman and Jew to lie in State in the Capitol. She was, herself, the victim of workplace discrimination early in her career. Although graduating top in her class at Columbia Law School in 1959, she could not find a job—no law firm was willing to hire her. The magnitude of her legal legacy cannot be overstated, and in many ways impacted Local 237. At one rally, Lilly told the crowd: "I've lived what you're going through. It's not only illegal, it's immoral. It's not just women, it's families that suffer. Retirement and Social Security are shortchanged. You can't catch up."

So, in this painful time of heartbreak and hardship, the question of "What do we do now?" is not just an academic exercise, but a call to action to find a practical, meaningful way to move on. This question is examined by journalist Charles Blow in a recent New York Times article entitled: "When Good People Don't Act, Evil Reigns." Referencing some of the world's worst episodes in history like the Holocaust or the genocide in Rwanda, Blow asks: "How did life simply go on with a horror in their midst? The conclusion that Blow reaches is that 'If you don't complain, you condone... fight, vote, email, post. Do all you can to stand up for the vulnerable, for the oppressed, for the planet itself.' Blow also warned: 'Don't let history record this moment as it recorded too many others. A time when good people did too little to confront wickedness and disaster.' He ends his piece by quoting the philosopher, Edmund Burke, who wrote in 1770, in his 'Thoughts on the Cause of the Present Discontent', 'The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing.' The good men and women of Local 237 are examples of heeding the warnings of Blow and Burke. They have hung-in where many have just hung-out. They have made a difference in this scary, uncharted time. In their own way, Local 237 members are the unsung heroes of the pandemic. This Fall edition of Newsline is dedicated to them.

In solidarity,

Gregory Floyd

Gregory Floyd
President, Teamsters Local 237



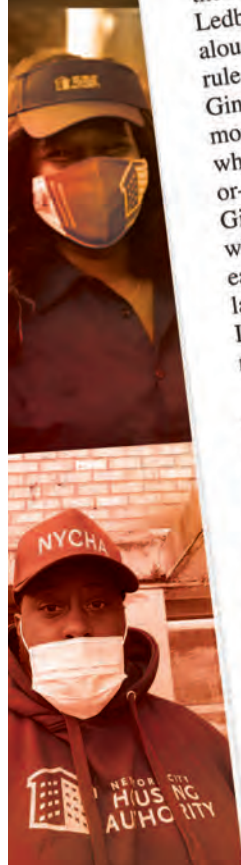
Lilly Ledbetter (left) at a Local 237 rally on behalf of pay equity for School Safety Agents. President Gregory Floyd at the podium.



President Obama signs the Lilly Ledbetter Act into law.



Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg was a trailblazer for equal justice.



Local 237 Member Services

UNION HEADQUARTERS

212-924-2000
216 West 14th Street
New York, NY 10011-7296

LOCAL 237 DIVISIONS

CITYWIDE, 2nd Fl.
212-924-2000
Donald Arnold, Director

LAW ENFORCEMENT, 2nd Fl.
212-924-2000
Derek Jackson, Director

HOUSING, 2nd Fl.
212-924-2000
Carl Giles, Housing Director

SPECIAL PROJECTS, 2nd Fl.
212-924-2000
Debbie Coleman, Esq., Special Projects Director

LONG ISLAND
631-851-9800
100 West Main Street, Babylon,
New York 11702
Benedict Carenza, Director
Long Island Welfare Fund:
For information on the various
funds call 800-962-1145

RETIREE, 8th Fl.
212-807-0555
Provides a variety of pre- and post-
retirement services, including
pension and health insurance
counseling to members. (Pension
counseling by appointment, Thurs-
days only). General retirement
counseling and retirement plan-
ning series during spring and fall.
Julie Kobi & Susan Milisits,
Co-Directors

LOCAL 237 DEPARTMENTS (Citywide and Housing)

SKILLED TRADES, 2nd Fl.
212-924-2000
Donald Arnold, Director

HEALTH AND SAFETY, 2nd Fl.
212-924-2000
Donald Arnold, Director
Susan McQuade, Coordinator

MEMBERS HEALTH, 2nd Fl.
212-924-2000
Susan McQuade, Director
smcquade@local237.org

MEMBERSHIP, 3rd Fl.
212-924-2000
Provides membership services and
records, including address changes.

WELFARE FUND, 3rd Fl.
212-924-7220
The Fund administers the eligibility,
enrollment, disability, optical and
death benefits directly by the Fund's
in-house staff, as well as prescription
and dental programs indirectly.
Mitchell Goldberg, Director

SOCIAL SERVICES, 3rd Fl.
212-924-7220 ext.7562
Living and working in New York can
be challenging and our members
work extremely hard. Social workers
also work hard by connecting peo-
ple to much needed assistance and
resources. With this in mind, Local 237
has introduced a new Social Ser-
vices Department featuring free
social work services that are available
to all members. The union knows
that its members have tough jobs
and that when encountering tough
personal challenges, learning about
possible solutions to those challenges
would make things that much easier.
Contact us to learn about the many
service we can provide.
Ayana Ali, Director

LEGAL SERVICES, 4th Fl.
212-924-1220
Lawyers advise and represent
members on covered personal
legal problems, including
domestic relations (family court
proceedings, divorce and separa-
tion), purchase and sale of a pri-
mary residence, wills, adoptions,
credit and consumer problems,
tenant rights and bankruptcies.
Mary Sheridan, Esq., Director
Kenneth Perry, Esq., Deputy Director

EXECUTIVE OFFICES, 5th Fl.

212-924-2000
Gregory Floyd, President
Ruben Torres,
Vice President
Donald Arnold,
Secretary-Treasurer

PERSONNEL, 5th Fl.
212-924-2000
Donald Arnold, Director and
Chief Negotiator

**POLITICAL ACTION &
LEGISLATION**, 5th Fl.
646-638-8501
Local 237 protects members'
rights by helping to sponsor
legislation that is important
to members, and by opposing
initiatives that would hurt
members.
Phyllis S. Shafran, Coordinator

GRIEVANCES/DISCIPLINARY PROBLEMS, 7th Fl.

212-924-2000
For grievances and job related
problems, first contact your
shop steward and/or grievance
representative. If they can't
resolve the issue, contact your
business agent.
Mal Patterson, Director of
Grievances and Hearings
Diana Doss, Esq.,
Grievance Coordinator

CIVIL SERVICE BAR ASSN

7th Fl., 212-675-0519
Saul Fishman, President
Aldona Vaiciunas,
Office Administrator and
Grievance Coordinator
Abbott Gorin, Esq.,
Business Representative
CSBA Welfare Fund
Alicare 866-647-4617

COMMUNICATIONS, 5th Fl.

646-638-8501
Phyllis S. Shafran, Director
Local 237 Newsline and
Retiree News & Views, Editor
Website: www.local237.org

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

8th Fl.
212-807-0550
Provides a variety of training
and educational advancement
opportunities for members.
Bertha Aiken, Director

USEFUL NUMBERS FOR PRE-RETIREEES

NYCERS

(New York City Employees Retirement System)

By Mail:
335 Adams St., Suite 2300,
Brooklyn, NY 11201-3751

In Person:
340 Jay Street, Mezzanine,
Brooklyn, NY 11201

Gen'l Information:
347-643-3000

Outside NYC toll-free:
877-6NYCERS

NYCERS Internet

www.nyclink.org/html/nycers

NYC Department of Education Retirement System

65 Court St., Brooklyn, NY 11201
718-935-5400

Social Security Administration

800-772-1213

NY State and Local Retirement Systems

518-474-7736



A message from the President

By Gregory Floyd

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

Be a Protester – Vote!

The Pew Research Center recently issued a report that found 6% of American adults — equaling around 15 million people — attended summer rallies to protest racial injustice. That finding falls in line with a Washington Post/ABC News poll, conducted in mid-July, that found that 70% of Americans believe that Blacks and other minorities are not treated equally with whites in the criminal justice system. These findings fly in the face of what President Trump termed, “a symbol of hate”, referring to a Black Lives Matter mural. Of course, the fact that it was painted directly in front of Trump Tower may have pushed the issue, but with this President, left-leaning protesters are anarchists. To him, they represent mob rule. And, he delights in stoking the fear of whites with warnings (although unproven) of caravans of Hispanics trying to enter this country and Muslim terrorists infiltrating our communities. His senior advisor, Stephen Miller, even appeared on the Tucker Carlson TV show to justify a federal crackdown on protesters in Portland, Oregon, by saying the often brutal actions by law enforcement was about the “survival of this country.” Right-wing extremists—such as the KKK and QAnon have been given a free pass. He says that there are “good people on both sides.” In fact, in the recent Presidential debate, Trump refused to condemn white supremacists, and said that if the election results are not immediately decisive (or, in other words, it appeared that he may not win) the Proud Boys, a far-right hate group, was to: “Stand back and stand by.”

But this Administration is not the first to use the weapon of fear to intimidate its citizens. As the New York Times Journalist Charles Blow tells us, founding father Benjamin Franklin, concerned that the British would try to reconcile with the colonists after the Revolutionary War, and “sought to inflame passions of the colonists and embarrass the British by concocting a report of packages containing 8 large scalps taken by the Senneka Indians from inhabitants of the frontiers of New York, New Jersey Pennsylvania and Virginia”, including scalps of women, boys and infants. Stoking white fear continued throughout American history with spikes

during Reconstruction, the Great Depression, the Civil Rights movement, to the current day. Sometimes its expression was more subliminal, like the Willie Horton presidential ad George Bush used in his 1988 campaigns, to the more violent showings in Trump ads of looters vandalizing local businesses and bashing police officers, admonishing voters that chaos will reign if Biden wins, making the untrue claim that Biden wants to defund law enforcement. The question of by-passing or skirting truth and morality to win or succeed in any context, has been a matter of debate throughout the ages. The concept that “the ends justifies the means” is attributed to Niccolo Machiavelli, who authored The Prince, which was published in the first half of the 1500s. Today's political climate is drenched in the debate. Which way to go to win? The Michelle Obama adage “when they go low, we go high” is often dwarfed by the cruelty of an Administration which uses every chance to instill fear in the citizenry. Frame and defame, is the current tactic. No one is too sacred. War heroes like John McCain, Gold Star parents like the Khans and dedicated, long-time career civil servants like Alexander Vindman and Marie Yovanovitch are demonized and discarded.

If you don't like what you see, what are you to do? VOTE!

By so doing, your voice is heard. Your ballot is a picket sign. Your protest is felt.

And don't be put off by lies that the vote is rigged; or that the voting process is fraudulent. Clearly, this pandemic crisis presents many obstacles. Traditionally, Republicans prefer in-person voting, at 54%, and Democrats prefer to vote by mail or early voting, at 71%. But, by whatever means you need to use, get beyond the hype and the manipulation. Get into the game. Request a mail-in ballot or personally pull the lever. Very often we've heard the warning that this election is the most important one in a lifetime, with its outcome impacting future generations. This is not just a debatable warning like calorie contents on a label... do you eat the cupcake anyway? This warning, if not heeded, can poison you. ■





So many of our members go above and beyond the call of duty, performing acts of heroism, ingenuity, kindness and generosity that demonstrate their professionalism and heart. They were willing to go that extra mile, and by so doing, made a difference in someone's life. Here are some of the pictures they want to share:



Julio Mathew (community member) stops by Public School 58 in Queens North to give them (School Safety Agents) PPE (personal protective equipment) as a way of thanking them for their service during this pandemic, along with a sign that he made for them, just to say Thank You.



CTEA High School Safety Agent Smith



Fire Department Cement Masons



Staten Island Proud! NYPD Community Outreach book bag giveaway at 1PP. Staten Island NYPD/SSD children with **Director Johnson**. All participants are at the Staten Island Command, and would like to thank NYPD/SSD for a wonderful rewarding day.



HRA Martin Hernandez

Local 237 NEWSLINE

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Executive Board

Gregory Floyd President	Ruben Torres Vice President	Donald Arnold Secretary-Treasurer	Jeanette Taveras Recording Secretary
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Phyllis S. Shafran
Editor

Special thanks in the preparation of Newsline to:
Gisela (GiGi) Reyes, Executive Administrative Assistant

IF YOU MOVE – Please send your change of address in writing to **Membership** to insure that you continue receiving your newspaper.



QUICK ACTION DEFUSES CRISIS

On Thursday, August 27, 2020 at Jacobi Hospital Police Officers responded to investigate a nurse's report of a patient and visitor smoking drugs inside an inpatient room. Upon arrival, Hospital Police Officers observed both subjects appeared to be under the influence of drugs. Hospital Police Officers discovered the visitors to be in possession of a knife and a fully loaded semiautomatic firearm. Subjects were placed under arrest.



(From L-R) Officers Jennifer Inoa, Fello Parrilla, Sylvester Heggie, and Sgt Jeffrey Vasquez



So many of our members go above and beyond the call of duty, performing acts of heroism, ingenuity, kindness and generosity that demonstrate their professionalism and heart. They were willing to go that extra mile, and by so doing, made a difference in someone's life. Here are some of the pictures they want to share:

DCAS MAINTENANCE WORKERS



GOING TO THE DOGS



Prior to the contest, Joey Chestnut (right), twelve-time champion of the world-renowned Nathan's Famous International Hot Dog Eating contest, gave tips on downing the dogs to Teamsters Local 237 members: **Dalino Florecio**, a COVID-19 survivor with the New York City Housing Authority; **Cherise Neal**, a food service manager with the New York City Office of Food and Nutrition; as well as **Peterson Lector** and **Anthony Baisden**, School Safety Agents with the NYPD and to **Gregory Floyd**, President of Local 237 (center). These members were honored for their work during the crisis.

Due to the pandemic, the annual July 4th championship took place from an undisclosed location in Brooklyn. Viewers could watch live on ESPN as a victorious Joey scarfed down 75 dogs and buns in 10 minutes to earn his 13th Mustard Belt.

HHC GRADUATION



HHC Graduation, September 11, 2020, at Jacobi Hospital. **Law Enforcement Business Agent Charlie Cotto** (second on right) attended the event.



SCHOOL SAFETY AGENTS DOING THEIR PART



School Safety Agent Wierzbicky and staff



Hunters Point Campus Team work

PLAQUE HONORS STATEN ISLAND SSA CHIN



On April 23, 2020, the Staten Island School Safety Command lost one of our family members - SSA CHIN (PS 4), the avid marathon runner/jogger, was recently remembered by a plaque dedication on the FDR boardwalk, thanks to the donations of family, friends and co-workers. Deeply missed and always remembered.



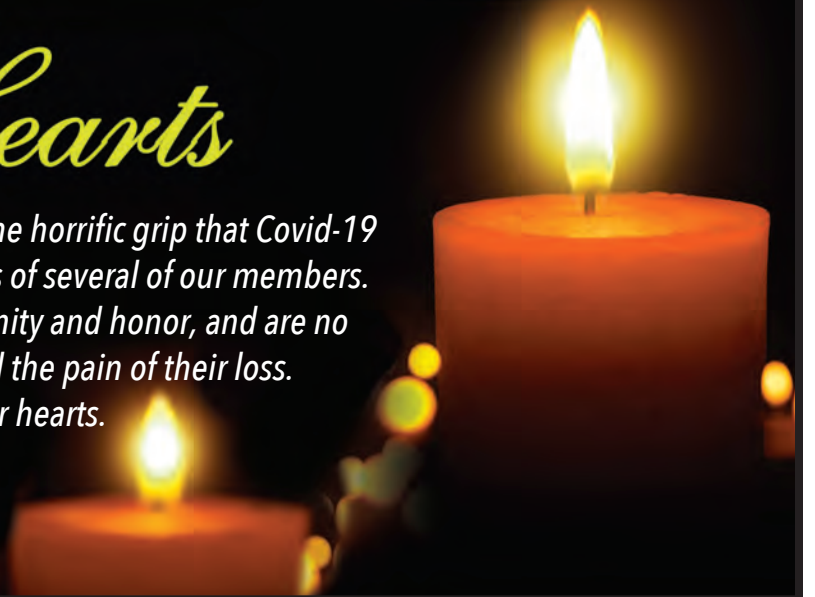
SSA's from PBBXWEST making sure everyone stays safe.

Forever in our Hearts

As the world weeps, and Americans from coast to coast try to break free from the horrific grip that Covid-19 has had on all of us, the Local 237 family also feels profound sorrow at the loss of several of our members. As we pause to remember those 237 brothers and sisters who served with dignity and honor, and are no longer with us, we pray that their families find comfort in knowing that we feel the pain of their loss. We will greatly miss our co-workers and friends. They will remain forever in our hearts.

May they rest in peace.

Gregory Floyd, President, Teamsters Local 237, IBT



Condolences

It is with great sorrow that we announce the passing of Nancy B. True



Recently, Local 237 lost a long-time giant in the service of our retirees, **Nancy B. True**. For decades, Nancy's dedication to making retirement secure and enjoyable was a cornerstone of Local 237's commitment to its members in all stages of their involvement with the Union. No doubt, Nancy played a large role in keeping many of our retirees active in union life, coining the slogan—and urging them to stick to it: "Retired from work not the union." Nancy's flawless events always brought huge, appreciative crowds. President Floyd sent this letter to Nancy prior to her passing, not resisting the opportunity to continue his years of teasing her about the one time things did not go as planned — the much anticipated dessert that melted at the Founders Day Luncheon. It was read to her by her son, Oren.

September 16, 2020

Dear Nancy:

Over the years, Local 237 has received many accolades. We earned praise for countless accomplishments that helped both our active members and retirees enjoy a better quality of life. Because of this, our membership has remained strong and our retirees, loyal, closely portraying your motto: "Retired from work not from the union".

From your fabulous holiday celebrations, to awards ceremonies, you always give your all. Your special style of mixing showmanship, attention to details, and just having fun, often transformed an otherwise drab union hall into a Broadway stage, an opera house, a disco and a four-star restaurant all in one. Everyone enjoys a Nancy event. Of course, I dare mention one exception: Founders Day ice cream dessert... enough said!

Nancy, I want you to know that your work ethic is an inspiration and your friendship a gift. Thank you for sharing both with me.

God bless.

Greg

All in the Family

Despite the horrors of the pandemic crisis, we want to recognize the joys of our lives, and we celebrate them.



In the bride's own words:
My name is **Stephanie Guzman** assigned to Hunters Point Campus in the 108 precinct in Queens North. My husband, **Clark Orellana**, is a correction officer and a part of the investigations division. We formerly met in January 2014 and recently got married on August 28, 2020. Yes during Covid-19. With all the craziness going on in the world we did not let Covid stop us from getting married. We got married at the Miller Place Inn located in Miller Place, NY.

THE JAMES R. HOFFA MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP



The James R. Hoffa Memorial Scholarship for high school seniors was recently awarded. The \$10,000 scholarship was bestowed on:

Student recipient:

Rosanna Pentola

daughter of Local 237

member, **James Pentola**



Let's all welcome the newest member of our team Jordynnn Aaliyah Short, daughter of our Law Enforcement Business Agent **Derek Short** and wife Jasmine. Jordynnn was born on Wed., Sept. 30, 2020 at 2:42pm, weighing 6 pounds 12 ounces and 19 inches long. Mom and baby are doing well. Congratulations!



Keeping you in the know

New York State Governor Andrew Cuomo Announces New Covid-19 Alert App

**ADD YOUR PHONE.
STOP THE SPREAD.
GET COVID-19 EXPOSURE ALERTS**



COVID Alert NY App

COVID Alert NY helps you get timely updates on COVID-19.

- COVID Alert NY alerts users if they have come into close contact — within 6 feet for at least 10 minutes — with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, even before the app user may experience symptoms.
- Knowing about a potential exposure allows you to self-quarantine immediately, get tested, and reduce the potential exposure risk to your family, friends, neighbors, co-workers and others.
- COVID Alert NY uses Bluetooth technology to estimate proximity to other phones with enabled Exposure Notification Service technology developed by Apple and Google.

COVID Alert NY protects your privacy and personal information.

- The app does not track your location or movement, use GPS, location services, or any movement or geographical information.
- The app will never collect, transmit, or store your personal information and is completely anonymous.
- Users must explicitly choose to turn on exposure notifications — and can turn it off at any time.

How can I download COVID Alert NY?

COVID Alert NY is available in the Google Play Store and Apple App Store starting October 1st.



COVID Alert NY is the official New York Exposure Notification System app created by the New York State Department of Health in partnership with Google and Apple.

- Our free smartphone app will be available for download for users 18+ on the Google Play and App Store starting October 1, 2020.
- After downloading the COVID Alert NY app, you will be able to use your phone in the fight against COVID-19 and get exposure alerts, without compromising your privacy or personal information.
- COVID Alert NY is part of New York's Contact Tracing Program and will enhance our efforts to contain the spread of COVID-19 and keep New Yorkers informed.

How can I learn more about COVID Alert NY? Additional information can be found at ny.gov/covidalerts.

THERE'S STILL TIME! BE COUNTED. OCTOBER 31 DEADLINE 2020 CENSUS

In addition to the possible loss of 3 seats in Congress, there are \$73 Billion for New York State used to fund programs affecting our schools, healthcare, seniors, veterans, mass transit, roadways – and much more – that could be underfunded or eliminated.



Shape the future for your family and community.

The U.S. Constitution requires that every decade we count our nation's population. By April 1, every household will receive a notice to complete the 2020 Census and be counted.

Responding is important.

You can shape the future for yourself, your family, and your community for the next 10 years. Data collected in the 2020 Census will inform the distribution of more than \$675 billion in federal funds to states and communities each year. Businesses, community leaders, and local governments use census data to create jobs, ensure public safety preparedness, and support community initiatives.

Results of the census impact funding for things like:

- › Schools and education
- › Health care facilities
- › Housing assistance
- › Public transportation
- › Child and adult food assistance programs
- › Assistance for people transitioning out of homelessness
- › Career and technical education grants
- › Medicare Part B

2020CENSUS.GOV

D-OP-BL-EN-127

Shape
your future
START HERE >

United States®
Census
2020

During this time of national crisis, our staff members served
Above and Beyond the Call of Duty

IN T

NYCHA SAFETY ASSOCIATES ARE MAKING THEIR DEVELOPMENTS SAFER FOR MEMBERS AND FOR RESIDENTS

With a Safety Associate at each NYCHA development, Local 237 members have real voice in addressing health and safety concerns. These members attend Safety Congresses (joint labor-management meetings) monthly, and their many efforts have been successful in reducing and/or eliminating safety and health hazards. But there is still much to be done. Here are some of those who lead on safety at their workplaces, and we will continue to highlight efforts of this group in future editions.



Sueann Middleton - Fort Washington. Stop accidents before they stop you!



Joyce Washington - Ingersoll Safety is my first priority at my development.



Carlos Cevallos - Highbridge. Safety always comes first!



Durriel Holder - Red Hook East. As a safety associate, I am trying to make sure my co-workers retire and go home the same way they came into the Authority. Don't be safety blinded, be safety minded.



Nathaniel Scott - Beach 41st Street. I love being part of the program—our safety congress solves problems in a timely manner, thanks to the effort of all our staff.



Jorge Sanchez - Penn Wortman. Safety is the key to a safe and productive day.

THEIR OWN WORDS



Men Fields – Baruch. We safety associates need to show leadership to address safety issues in our workplaces.



Stanley McEntire – Albany Houses. The congresses are successful because we work with the managers and the union to fix safety issues.



Tasia Sharpe In life I learned you have to work hard to get what you want, nothing is given to you. Remember to work safe and wear your PPE.



Marcus Blake – Wash/Lex. Wear your PPE! Stay safe. Have a good day.



Sam Garner – Tilden. Safety starts with you; if you think something is not safe, say something.



Larry Blanco – St. Mary's Park. Working through COVID with all the short-staffing has been hard, but we worked through it. Having safety associates is a real plus for helping us to resolve issues.



Lady Valentina-Chestnut We work to ensure the safety of all the residents and the staff alike.



Deya Gilmore – Mariner's Harbor. These months during COVID have been intense, but we have worked together to keep ourselves and our residents safe.



Luis Quinones – Sackwern. No job is so important and no service is so urgent that one can not take time to perform our work safely.



Lisa Wright – Redfern PPE is essential to doing our work safely, and the safety congresses help us make sure we get that equipment.



LONG ISLAND REPORT

*Being proud of each and every Local 237 member goes without saying, for the Long Island Division. Today was extra special as **Jennifer Dziurka** an Aide at the Plainview Old Bethpage School District, Stratford Road, saved a choking child by performing the Heimlich maneuver. How incredible is that! Thank god you acted and thanks from all of your sister and brother Teamsters!!*



Plainview aide **Jennifer Dziurka**



Commack School District **John Hieronymus**



Todd Raplee from Commack School District is one of our new members, who was instrumental in bringing in Teamsters 237 to Commack schools. PERB certified the vote last week and we are now their representatives of over 80 new members. Looking forward to great things!



New Commack members **Justin Sessa, Matt Veira, Anthony Damico** and **Jordan Maccaro**



Commack School District **Danny Dellasala**



Commack School District **Dave Gumm II**



Commack School District **Greg T. Trancheff**



Commack School District **Kevin Frankle**



North Babylon School District custodian **Paul Salemi**



North Babylon School District custodian **Brenda Benizzi**



Shop Steward **Joshua Guandique** from Half Hollow Hills School District proves hard work pays off. He started a family and is now a proud home owner!



Brentwood School Shop Steward **Edwin Jimenez** also proves hard work and commitment pays off. He started a family and purchased a house!



Julie Ann Wallace Tartaglione who was an Aide at the Plainview Old Bethpage School District who applied and was hired as a Full Time Cleaner. This is a huge accomplishment for Julie and her family!



Luanne Castagna retires from the West Islip School District after 21 years of service! West Islip Liaison **Luann Dunne** and **Benny Carenza** presented her with a retirement plaque. Good luck and enjoy retirement.



Commack School District **Mark Zumpol** and **Danny Goldberg**



PPE delivery to Brentwood nurses



Town of Babylon **Michael Sollo** and **Lucas Deitch** on storm cleanup

POLITICAL AND LABOR NEWS

Tucker Carlson Must Go!

Black Leaders Demand His Firing By Fox News

On August 31, in front of FoxNews, **Gregory Floyd**, President of Teamsters Local 237 was joined by NYS Assembly Member and Reverend Al Taylor; community activist Willie Walker and members of Local 237 to demand that Tucker Carlson, Fox News TV show host be immediately fired. Carlson justified the actions of Kyle Rittenhouse, the 17-year old vigilante killer of two protesters, and the wounding of another, in Kenosha, Wisconsin, as they rallied against the unprovoked police shooting of Jacob Blake. Tucker told viewers: “Kenosha has devolved into anarchy, the authorities in charge of the city abandoned it.” Fuming: “How shocked are we that 17-year-old kids with rifles decided they had to maintain order when no one else would.” Carlson’s racist rhetoric and fear-mongering over the Black Lives Matter movement has sparked internal turmoil at Fox News for some time.



Local 237’s president Gregory Floyd at the podium joined by NYS Assembly Member Al Taylor (right) and community activist Willie Walker (left).

FLOYD’S MESSAGE TO FOX NEWS WAS:

I am here today not only as a Black man, or a labor leader.

I am here today as a father and as a member of the human race.

I’m here today to say, that spewing hate for ratings is shameful.

A race monger is a disgrace to all races.

And someone who spits venom for profit is a special kind of villain.

That’s someone without a heart, a soul or conscience. That person is Tucker Carlson. He is a disgrace. He is dangerous. He is a phony. And FoxNews must fire him now! Shame on Fox if they don’t! I am also asking for the TV advertisers of Carlson’s show to boycott him.

They include: Disney, Papa Johns, My Pillow USA, T-Mobile, Fisher Investments, Sandals Resorts, Poshmark, WeatherTech and Sure Payroll. If they don’t disavow him, they are guilty of propagating messages of evil and hate. ▮



Gregory Floyd (left) and staff of Local 237 protest Carlson.

A Labor Day message to the members and staff of Teamsters Local 237 from our President, Gregory Floyd:

This year, there was no Labor Day parade... no marching along Fifth Avenue with floats and music ablaze. For many, there were no BBQs, no end of summer trip to the beach or rush to take advantage of the Back-to School sales. The pandemic crisis left us reeling. So many families have suffered in unimaginable ways, with the tragic loss of life and livelihood. We have found that coronavirus is not just a disease in the body but a disease in our nation. Covid-19 exposed the systemic racial and economic injustice. But the virus also exposed something more: The true character, dignity and dedication of our members and staff. Throughout this most horrific time in our country’s history, you came to work and you didn’t just “show up”, you shined. You do a tough job and epitomize Governor Cuomo’s description of New Yorkers as tough. So, although this year had no parade, on behalf of millions of New Yorkers, I want to say “Thank You” and ask that you take pride in the fact that because of you, the lives of so many are better, safer and hopeful. ▮



Labor Day 2019

NY Takes A Proactive Approach To Covid-19

By Vito R. Pitta, Esq. Member, Pitta Bishop & Del Giorno, LLC

As we approach seven months since President Trump issued a “Proclamation on Declaring a National Emergency Concerning the Novel Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Outbreak,”¹ on March 13, 2020, our country, our state, and our city continue to grapple with the devastating health and safety impacts of COVID-19, not to mention the distressing economic and budgetary situations that it has caused. While much of the initial governmental responses to COVID-19 were reactive— attempts by government to ease burdens caused by COVID-19—some recent enactments by New York State and New York City have taken a proactive approach to dealing with COVID-19.

Preparedness Plans for Future Health Emergencies

On September 7, 2020—Labor Day—Governor Cuomo signed legislation (S8617B/A10832) requiring public employers to draft a preparedness plan to safeguard the health and safety of public employees in the event of a future public health emergency. The legislation was sponsored by Senator Andrew Gounardes (D-22, Brooklyn) and Assemblyman Peter Abbate (D-49, Brooklyn). Pursuant to the law, state and local governments, including school districts, must develop these operation plans and submit them to their respective unions and labor management committees within 150 days and finalize them by April 1, 2021.

The operation plans must include:

- List and description of positions considered essential.

- Descriptions of protocols to follow to enable all non-essential employees to work remotely.
 - Description of how employers would stagger work shifts to reduce overcrowding.
 - Protocols for personal protective equipment.
 - Protocol for when an employee is exposed to disease.
 - Protocol for documenting hours and work locations for essential workers.
 - Protocol for working with essential employees’ localities for identifying emergency housing if needed.
- Any other requirement determined by the New York State Department of Health, such as testing and contact tracing.

Additionally, the Department of Labor will also create an online portal for public employees to report violations of health and safety rules for communicable diseases, including COVID-19.

COVID-19 Task Forces

In anticipation of potential federal authorization and approval of a COVID-19 vaccine later this year, on September 24, 2020, Governor Cuomo announced that New York State would form two task forces—a Clinical Advisory Task Force, to advise on the vaccine’s safety and effectiveness, and a Vaccine Distribution and Implementation Task Force, to advise on the administration of any such vaccine.

The independent Clinical Advisory Task Force is comprised of scientists, doctors, and health experts who will review every COVID-19 vaccine

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¹ <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/proclamation-declaring-national-emergency-concerning-novel-coronavirus-disease-covid-19-outbreak/>.

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NY Takes A Proactive Approach To Covid-19

authorized by the federal government, and will advise New York State on the vaccine's safety and effectiveness in fighting the virus. In announcing the creation of the task force, Governor Cuomo said, "The federal government's response to COVID and the White House's dispute with the FDA raises serious questions about whether or not the vaccine has become politicized. Frankly, I'm not going to trust the federal government's opinion and I wouldn't recommend to New Yorkers based on the federal government's opinion. We're going to put together our own review committee headed by the Department of Health to review the vaccine, and I'm appointing a committee that is going to come up with a vaccine distribution and implementation plan on how we will do it. New York's response to COVID has been a model for this country, and we should also be the model vaccination program for the country."

Members of the Clinical Advisory Task Force include: Charles M. Rice, Ph.D., The Rockefeller University; Scott M. Hammer, MD, NewYork-Presbyterian/Columbia University Medical Center; Adolfo Garcia-Sastre, Ph.D., Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai; Sharon Nachman, MD, Renaissance School of Medicine at Stony Brook University; Kelvin Lee, MD, Roswell Park; Bruce Farber, MD, Northwell Health; Shawnequa Callier, MA, JD, George Washington University School of Medicine and Health Sciences.

In addition, the Governor established a Vaccine Distribution and Implementation Task Force that is charged with designing the best COVID-19 vaccination administration program in the nation. The Vaccine Distribution and Implementation Task Force is comprised of experts in public health, immunizations, government operations, data, and other fields relevant to vaccine distribution and administration. It is charged with developing a plan for vaccine administration that will include:

- Prioritization of vaccine recipients based solely on clinical guidance.
- Distribution network capable of providing two doses of vaccine to all New Yorkers.
- Qualified professionals and organizations to administer the vaccine.
- Data and IT infrastructure for scheduling appointments and tracking program metrics.
- Public education regarding vaccination program.
- Procurement of necessary supplies and equipment.

Members of the Vaccine Distribution and Implementation Task Force include: Howard Zucker, Commissioner, NYS Department of Health; Robert Mujica, NYS Budget Director; Jim Malatras, Chancellor of the State University of

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Caring for Your Mental Health During the Coronavirus Outbreak

By Ayana Ali

Director Local 237- Social Services

Everyone living in America has certainly experienced a variety of emotions in the last six months due to the COVID-19 pandemic and racial unrest. An increased feeling of anxiety, sadness, germophobia, suspicion, and just being in a funk is not uncommon and to some extent, very normal for this time. Feeling a need or a want to talk to someone about what is happening in the world and your life personally during this time is not abnormal.

That said, complicating matters is that the thought of sitting in an enclosed space with another person with or without a mask or being in a waiting room in anticipation of seeing a therapist or psychiatrist/nurse practitioner may also induce anxiety and wariness. So how does one engage in the therapeutic process in a way that is likely to lower anxiety or fear of viruses and germs more than it is to induce them? The answer is surprisingly simple: via telemedicine and virtual mental health care. Telemedicine is the provision of healthcare services via a phone or other telecommunication medium such as Teams, Zoom or an app. Virtual mental health care is talk therapy services provided via one of the aforementioned methods.

Why is telemedicine and its acceptance as a legitimate version of treatment important? Because there are people who need mental health treatment who might not ever have the time or desire to enter a therapist's or psychiatric prescriber's office and who might not otherwise seek the help that they

need. Previously, telehealth services or services provided in clients' and patients' homes were typically not covered or only covered on a limited basis. Now, services are more accessible to more people. The rise of telehealth in the age of the pandemic makes obtaining or continuing services easier for those who aren't comfortable being in an office now or ever.

Here is some helpful info:

- Most health insurance companies have previously authorized telehealth psychiatric and therapeutic services.
- Because of the pandemic, the great majority of insurance companies who had previously disallowed telehealth services, are now allowing it and have not indicated that the window for flexibility in visit style will soon close.
- Many insurance companies are waiving co-payment and deductible costs during the COVID-19 period, making seeking treatment during this time even less costly than it may have previously been.
- Telehealth services make accessing care easier in that there is no transportation requirement and so client/clinician location within the state is not a factor in the treatment process.
- The federal Ryan Haight Act requires a provider to conduct an initial, in-person examination of a patient before prescribing a controlled substance electronically. Effective March 17, 2020, according to the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, this requirement has been suspended for the

duration of the public health emergency. This makes medication management continuation and or initiation an easier process.

- Governor Cuomo announced the creation of a state-wide hotline to provide free mental health services to individuals at home who may be experiencing stress and anxiety due to the COVID-19 crisis. The New York State Office of Mental Health Emotional Support Helpline "provides free and confidential support, helping callers experiencing increased anxiety due to the coronavirus emergency."
- The top 5 therapy apps Talk Space, Betterhelp, Larkr, Regain and TeenCounseling have grown in popularity, are HIPAA compliant, well-regulated and simple to navigate via your smart phone or computer/tablet.

If an in person visit is not right for you right now or ever, but you still want to connect with therapeutic or therapy services please consider telehealth and telemedicine. If you are unsure what your policy covers, please call the number on the back of your health insurance card to ask specifically about these services.

Members and their dependents can contact the union's Social Services Department at 212-924-7220 and receive assistance in finding a counselor or prescriber, if necessary, who can be seen remotely either via telephone or video call through your health insurance. Please don't hesitate to call. The union is here for our members. ■



Your Rent During the Health Crisis

By Sara Wagner, Esq.

Assistant Director of Local 237, Legal Services Plan

Many members and their families have found it difficult to pay the rent since March, when the City shut down. The first piece of advice is: If you can pay your rent, PAY YOUR RENT. There are many groups trying to get rent canceled or forgiven during this time, but that has not happened. You are responsible for your rent, even though there is a health crisis.

If you get any Court papers or notices from your landlord, don't panic. Landlords can not dispossess people quickly during a pandemic. The Housing Court is not ready for in person appearances, and has been functioning remotely. No new cases will be put on the court calendar for some time. There are also many things preventing evictions from happening. Please do not risk your health by going to the Court when you can use your telephone to get the help you need.

If you get a Notice, or a Demand to Pay Rent from your landlord or a lawyer, do not ignore it. Compare it against your rent receipts and make sure the landlord is right. Note the day you received it and how you received it, and don't throw it away. If you get legal papers, or a Petition, after you get the notices, do NOT travel to the Court building! Instead, call (212) 924-2000 and ask for advice from

the Legal Services Plan. There is also a number on the Petition to call and get legal advice and representation if you are not a Teamsters Local 237 member.

The Governor and the Courts have imposed an "eviction moratorium" through October 1, 2020. That means even if there was a warrant of eviction issued before or during the pandemic, they could not serve that warrant before October 1, 2020. After October 1, 2020, the landlord must ask the court for permission to issue the warrant by sending you papers called a "Motion," notifying you and giving you a chance to appear by phone or computer. If you get a Motion, call (212) 924-2000 and ask for advice from the Legal Services Plan. Your friends and family can call Housing Court Answers 212-962-4795 or go to evictionfreenyc.org to connect with a lawyer.

In June, the New York State Legislature passed the Safe Harbor Act, which says that tenants who can prove COVID related financial hardship in very specific documents (showing their income and assets before and after) will not be evicted for nonpayment of rent owed between March 7, 2020 through the end of COVID restrictions. Instead, the Court can issue a money judgment against the tenant for the

amount owed, but the tenant won't be evicted. The Safe Harbor Act requires a Housing Court Judge to decide whether the tenant proved the hardship, and when the rent was due. If the rent owed is from before March, the tenant can still be evicted. The Safe Harbor Act also doesn't prevent evictions in Holdover cases, where the landlord seeks possession, not rent.

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention ("CDC") has issued its own eviction moratorium through December 31, 2020 which requires tenants to sign a Declaration under penalty of perjury. The Declaration says that the tenant has low income, they have tried to get government assistance, they can't pay the full rent but are paying as much as they can, if they were evicted they would become homeless, and that they understand they are liable for the rent. Before you sign any Declaration like this, get legal advice.

The bottom line: if you can pay your rent, please do! But if the pandemic has left you or someone you know owing rent, nothing will happen right away. The courts are slow, and there are actions to take which may prevent an eviction. Please open your mail, save the papers you receive, and get legal advice before you act. ■



Keeping you in the know

— Continued from Page 13 **NY Takes A Proactive Approach To Covid-19**

New York; Patrick Murphy, NYS Director of Emergency Management; Rajiv Rao, New York State Chief Technology Officer; Kenneth Raske, Greater New York Hospital Association; Michael Dowling, Chief Executive Officer of Northwell Health; George Gresham, President of 1199SEIU United Healthcare Workers East; Bea Grouse, President of the Healthcare Association of New York State; Sarah Ravenhall, Executive Director at New York State Association of County Health Officials; Bonnie Litvack MD, President, The Medical Society of the State of New York; Michael Duteau, President, Chain Pharmacy Association of New York State; Deanna Ennello-Butler, Executive Director at Pharmacists Society of the State of New York; Rose Duhan, President, Community Health Care Association for New York State; Alicia Quellette, President, Albany Law School; Mantosh Dewan, MD, Interim President, SUNY Upstate Medical.

Local 237 Member Call to Action

One thing that has certainly been highlighted by the state and local government budget shortfalls caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has been how critical federal funding will be to New York City and New York State—not only in times of emergency but in normal times as well. The primary method of determining how much federal aid that is received by New York State and New York City is the census. Every ten years, the United States Census takes account of every person living in the United States. This process is required by the United States Constitution, and it has taken place every decade

since 1790. The share of federal funds that are received by New York State and New York City for public education, affordable housing, infrastructure, and more—plus the number of seats that New York State has in Congress—is all determined by the census. For this reason, it is critically important that all Local 237 members make sure to respond to any inquiries from the United States Census Bureau, or if you have not received a letter or inquiry, contact the Census Bureau to complete the census and be counted. In addition to voting in the November 3, 2020 Presidential Election, completing the census is another way that Local 237 members and their families can also be proactive in preparing for the future. For the first time, the census can be completed online. To do so, you may visit www.my2020census.gov.



Vito R. Pitta is a partner at Pitta LLP, a firm whose practice consists primarily of traditional union-side labor law, employment law, employee benefits law, and campaign finance compliance law. The firm counts more than forty local and international labor unions as its clients. Mr. Pitta's practice consists of counseling the firm's clients on traditional labor and employment matters, as well as advising the firm's political campaign and political action committee clients with respect to federal, state, and local campaign finance laws. Mr. Pitta is also a Partner in Pitta LLP's affiliated personal injury firm, Pitta & Baione LLP, which represents victims of the September 11th terrorist attacks; and a member of Pitta LLP's affiliated lobbying firm, Pitta Bishop & Del Giomo LLC.

**NYC
HEALTH+
HOSPITALS**

Retirement Identification Cards

We are ready to implement the issuance of the Retirement Card of Special Officers.

A retirement card provides a means to identify association with NYC H+H, without providing authority the access to NYC H+H facilities/business units. A Special Officer, in good standing, with an effective retirement date as of March 26, 2018, or thereafter, serving in the titles Supervising Special Officer, and Special Officer with NYC H+H are eligible to receive a retirement identification card provided they are in good standing. Below is the eligibility criteria, distribution, and ID content:

ELIGIBILITY

The years of service with NYC H+H as an agency will not be a factor in determining eligibility. Central Office Human Resources, in consultation with the Office of Legal Affairs, will determine if an employee retired in good standing. At a minimum, the facility Director of HP/Central Office Human Resources will review recent performance evaluation, relevant disciplinary records, substantiated complaints, or matters of misconduct.

GOOD STANDING

The issuance of a retirement card is within the sole discretion of Central Office Human Resources and will not be renewed or replaced for lost or damage card.

DISTRIBUTION

Retired employees will be issued an identification card by Central Office Human Resources; and a letter of acknowledgement. Retirement identification cards will be issued the month following the effective retirement date as reflected in PeopleSoft, and will not be issued prior to effective retirement date. Cards will be mailed via first class mail, certified return receipt, to the home address as reflected in PeopleSoft or can be picked up in person from Central Office Human Resources at the 55 Water Street location.

IDENTIFICATION CARD CONTENT

Identification Cards will contain the following information:

- Retired status date as known to NYC H+H at time of request
- First and last name
- Corporate job title (as of retirement date)

WWW.LOCAL237.ORG/HOME/RETIRING

TO RETIRE OR NOT RETIRE! This online series is designed to provide you with the information and resources you will need to decide if retirement is right for you. Maybe you have been thinking about retirement but are not sure. This online series will help guide you with your decision making. Retirement is a time to redefine yourself.

Each online sessions will provide an overview of the resources available and the processes necessary for a smooth transition into retirement. In addition, we will focus on different aspects of retirement such as financial, benefits and transition from work to retirement. Topics for you to consider and decide what retirement is to be like for YOU! Retirement is a very personal experience. This online series is designed to help you plan for your unique retirement.

HERE ARE THE GOALS OF THE ONLINE SERIES:

1. Learn about the retirement process
2. Learn about the New York City Health Insurance Benefits and Local 237 Welfare Fund Benefits
3. Learn about financial planning, Social Security and Local 237 Legal Services

Visit: **WWW.LOCAL237.ORG/HOME/RETIRING**

The Retiree Division staff are here to assist, support and guide you through this special time of your life. Local 237 remains with you throughout your life...

YOU RETIRE FROM WORK... NOT FROM THE UNION!

Personal Notes

As of August 3, 2020, **John Gallagher** was appointed the new LI Business Agent. He receives a weekly compensation of \$528.00 (\$27,456 per year). He is also entitled to car allowance of \$860.00 per month.



So many of our staff members go above and beyond the call of duty, performing acts of heroism, ingenuity, kindness and generosity that demonstrate their professionalism and heart. They were willing to go that extra mile, and by so doing, made a difference in someone's life. Here are some of the pictures they want to share:

IN THE OFFICE AT LOCAL 237



PERIODICALS
POSTAGE PAID
AT NEW YORK, NY



DATED MATERIAL

FALL 2020

Are you moving?

To change your address, fill in the form below, cut it out, and mail it back to Newsline at the above address.

Name

New Address

City

State

Zip

