RETIREE



McCain vs Obama on Retirement Security

Social Security is the principal source of income for two-thirds of older Americans, and the only source of income for onethird. Social Security also serves as an important safety net, protecting America's workers and their families against the risks of death and disability.

The nation is suffering from skyrocketing gaso-



JOHN MCCAIN

SOCIAL SECURITY • McCain recently called the Social Security system "a disgrace." He told a town hall meeting in Denver July 7:

Americans have got to understand that we are paying present-day retirees with the taxes paid by young workers in America today. And that's a disgrace. It's an absolute disgrace and it's got to be fixed.

Economist Jared Bernstein at the Economic Policy Institute said he was shocked by McCain's statement:

That is truly an amazing quote. It's like he's saying, "I just found out that taxes come from people—that's a disgrace." It betrays a really quite scary lack of knowledge about basic government.

• John McCain supports privatization:

I'm totally in favor of personal savings accounts . . . I believe that private savings accounts are a part of it [Social Security reform] along the lines that President Bush proposed . . . I campaigned in support of President Bush's proposal. . .

Wall Street Journal interview (3/8/08)

• A centerpiece of McCain's 2000 presidential bid was a plan to divert a portion of Social Security payroll taxes to private accounts, much as President Bush proposed unsuccessfully. The plan would put workers' retirement money into the stock market and reduce the amount of Social Security payments they would receive from the government.

• The McCain campaign says McCain would consider raising the retirement age to 68 and reducing cost-of-living adjustments to keep Social Security solvent.

• In 2005 McCain supported a Social Security plan that would require deep benefit cuts or a massive increase in the debt.

In 2003, McCain voted to use Social Secu-

line, grocery, and health care prices. With the collapse of the housing market, millions of homeowners have lost their savings. Hundreds of corporations have backed out of their pension promises and far fewer companies are offering the kind of defined-benefit pension plans that Local 237 members have, which greatly reduced the number of older Ameri-

rity funds to pay off the national debt.

• In 1998, McCain voted twice to replace Social Security's guaranteed benefits with income from risk-based private investments.

MEDICARE

• McCain voted for the 2005 budget reconciliation bill that reduced spending on Medicare by \$6.4 billion.

• In 2007 McCain missed a critical vote to amend Medicare Part D to allow Medicare to negotiate lower prices for prescription drugs.

• In 2005, McCain voted against preventing steep increases in Medicare Part B premiums.

• In 1997, McCain voted to raise the Medicare eligibility age to 67 and to impose a new copayment for home health care visits.

UNION RETIREES

• McCain voted against a measure to provide temporary health insurance assistance to retirees of bankrupt steel companies.



BARACK OBAMA

SOCIAL SECURITY & RETIREMENT SECURITY • Obama opposed a plan that would require deep benefit cuts in Social Security or a massive increase in debt:

I do not want to cut benefits or raise the retirement age. I believe there are a number of ways we can make Social Security solvent that do not involve placing these added burdens on our seniors.

Quad-City Times, 9/21/07

• In the midst of the 2005 debate over Social Security privatization, Obama gave a major speech at the National Press Club arguing against privatization. He repeatedly voted against Republican amendments that aimed to privatize Social Security or cut benefits.

• Obama voted to force companies to properly fund their pension plans so taxpayers don't end up footing the bill.

cans living in poverty. Millions of people will be almost completely reliant on Social Security and Medicare to support them in their retirement years.

Democratic candidate Senator Barack Obama and Republican candidate Senator John McCain have very different approaches to retirement security. The Teamsters have endorsed Obama.

• Obama supports increasing the maximum amount of earnings covered by Social Security above the current \$102,000 as part of a payroll tax reform package that will keep Social Security solvent.

• Obama would eliminate income taxes for seniors making less than \$50,000. This will provide an immediate tax cut averaging \$1,400 to 7 million seniors.

• Obama will protect pensions by putting promises to workers higher on the list of debts that companies cannot shed.

MEDICARE

• In 2005, Obama voted to prevent steep increases in Medicare Part B premiums.

• In 2007 Obama voted to amend Medicare Part D to allow Medicare to negotiate lower prices for prescription drugs. Republicans filibustered the bill.

• Obama supports allowing seniors to import safe prescription drugs from overseas, and will prevent pharmaceutical companies from blocking cheap and safe generic drugs from the market.

Vote Silver in the NY Primaries



Local 237 staff members and retirees with New York State Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver (center), who is running in the Sept. 9 primaries, at a meeting July 15 called by the NYS AFL-CIO and the NYC Central Labor Council. President Greg Floyd expressed appreciation "for the many legislative victories that we have amassed" under Silver's Assembly leadership.

Retiree Division members in the photo above are Laurel Euland, Ken Fox, James Spicer, Doris Welch, Barbara Hazelwood, Director Nancy True, and Deputy Director Winston George.

he theme of this year's annal Founders Day celebration was the 2008 elections, and the overwhelming sentiment among the 350 retirees and guests gathered at the New York Hilton June 6 was loud and clear: Barack Obama for president. As retiree Allen Dubner said, "A vote for McCain is a vote for Bush." Said another retiree, Leroy Nias, "If Obama is elected, he will do the best, better than McCain. We need a change."

Retirees responded enthusiastically to keynote luncheon speaker U.S. Senator Charles Schumer, who appealed to them to help turn out the vote for Obama. Schumer said that as chair of the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee, he is "leading the charge" to elect enough Democratic senators to create a filibuster-proof Senate.

Speaking just three days after Obama won enough delegates to clinch the Democratic Party nomination for president, Schumer was met with cheers when he declared, "We're all going to unite behind



Barack Obama. We need a Democratic president."

At the luncheon, Local 237 President Greg Floyd anounced that the local's DRIVE program,

Senator Charles Schumer and President Greg Floyd

which directs members' contributions to support grassroots political action and lobbying on Capitol Hill and in Albany, has more than doubled its participation, becoming a leader in the Teamsters national DRIVE program.

Also speaking at the luncheon was New York State Comptroller Thomas Di-Napoli, who assured retirees of the stability of New York State's pension fund, the third largest pension plan in the country, and promised to fight to protect public employee benefits and pensions.

A morning panel, "The 2008 Elections: RETIREES COUNT!," focused on how to transform the large senior vote into a massive vote for Obama. It was followed by questions from the floor.

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Founders Day The 2008 Elections: RETIRI

Excerpts from U.S. Senator **Charles Schumer**

ublic housing is an amazing resource. But the city, state, and federal governments have cut and cut and cut public housing. New York has always been a city of immigrants. Their kids go forth and do great things not only for themselves, but for the country. If we don't have affordable housing for people climbing this ladder, that base is gone. We (Nydia Velasquez, in the House, and I) are trying to get federal funds for all NYCHA housing developments in New York City.

There's a chance this year, but it's next year we're going to succeed.

Second, something that will help your union and every other union and workers everywhere: EFCA, the Employee Free Choice Act. Unionization used to be 35 percent. Now it's 13 percent; in the private sector, it's only 8 percent. People say it's the "new economy," but that's bull. There's no reason for auto workers on an assembly line to be organized and not clerical workers in an office tower. Employers have found ways to get around the laws. They hire consultants whose jobs are to destroy unions or prevent them altogether. People today have the same need for benefits as in the past. Canada has pretty much the same economy as ours, and their unionization



presented \$2,000 to The Bridge Fund of New York City, which provides assistance for New Yorkers who face eviction from their homes. L-r: Bridge Fund Director Maria Toledo, Sunshine Club members Gus Ramirez and Ruth Glover; Bridge Fund Manhattan

Program Director Jaqueline Nieves; club members Helen Mashburn, chairperson, who presented the check, Grace Klein, and Shirley Hall. Inset: Nieves holds an enlarged replica of the check. The funds were raised by the Sunshine Club from Local 237 retirees



Founders Day photos by Adrienne Haywood-James U.S. Senator Charles Schumer addresses Founders Day luncheon. On the dais are Local 237 President Greg Floyd, Vice President Richard Hendershot, Secretary Treasurer Ruben Torres, Recording Secretary Pat Stryker, and trustees Evaristo Pabon, Jr. and Ed Kane; Retiree Division Director Nancy True; and other local officials and guests.

> is 25 percent. Why? They have card check. They get 50.1 percent of the workers to sign cards, and the employers have to bargain, and if they don't, arbitration is imposed. If we pass the EFCA, unionization will go up.

> I made a promise to John Sweeney {head of the AFL-CIO], James Hoffa, and Change to Win that every Democrat we elect will vote for the EFCA. The Republicans use the filibuster to defeat everything. They filibustered the EFCA. Even though we had 52 votes, a majority, every Democrat and one Republican, they filibustered and it was defeated. We need more Democrats in the Senate, and I'm leading the charge. And we need a Democratic president.

I'm in charge of increasing the number of Democratic votes in the Senate. To 60, maybe; we have 51 now. And we'll pick up seats in

the House. We will have a program for health care and other needs that the nation hasn't seen since LBJ in the '60s.

We're all going to unite behind Obama. I believe Barack Obama will win more than 300 electoral votes. McCain is trying to come off as a reformer. Uh uh. He has the Bush program.

The Republicans will try to divert people to issues that don't matter. Rev. Wright, for example. But does he have anything to do with health care? jobs? education? No.

I ask you as political activists, as politically concerned retirees, to talk to your neighbors, talk to your family. You're here because you love America. It's beautiful, and it's been taken from us. We're going to take this country back.

ES COUNT

Retirees Speak Out

Retiree News & Views asked retirees at Founders Day what were the most important issues to them in the 2008 elections. Following are excerpts from their replies.

OLIVE HERNANDEZ, retired caretaker J, NYCHA; with her guest, Jean Kelly, a retired Triboro Bridge and Tunnel employee.

Hernandez: The cost of living.

Kelly: Everything is going up but benefits. Bread, milk—don't even mention gas.

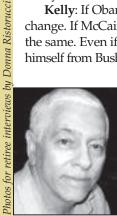
Hernandez: Housing. I live in public housing, and my rent went up \$100 last year and again this year.



Kelly: The economic stimulus money, they talk like it's going to turn the country around. No. I can barely meet my expenses.

Hernandez: We need a change, especially for the younger generation. With the cost of living now, how will the younger generation make out? As for our generation, we're living longer. What will happen to us? My oldest daughter was in the Marines for 20 years and now she's retired. My younger daughter, my baby, was in Desert Storm for four years. I would like this war to stop.

Kelly: If Obama wins, there will be change. If McCain wins, everything will be the same. Even if he's trying to distance himself from Bush, his policies are the same.



SAL TACORONTE, retired maintenance worker, NYCHA The economy. It hasn't affected me much. I got rid of my car, so that helped. Prices are up, seniors are really getting hurt. If they

don't do well with their pension and Social Security, they have big problems.

Hospitalization for seniors, prescription drugs for seniors, are big problems.

The war's a big issue. We need to end it so we can concentrate our resources here at home. We have to win it and get out. It's costing too many lives, too much money.

LEROY NIAS, retired sergeant, School

Safety. The most important issue is health benefits, especially for seniors. Prescription

drugs, medication for retirees. There should be a cap. They shouldn't be able to charge what they feel like. That's most important. I take two medications. They cost an arm and a leg.



If Obama is elected, he will do the best, better than McCain. We need a change. We see what those people, the Republicans, do. Let's see that the others can do.

ALLEN DUBNER, retired maintenance worker, NYCHA; with wife, Linda. Ending the war in Iraq is number one. A trillion



dollars has been wasted. The economy is number two. Health care is number three. Pensions is number four. We're cut-

ting from every social program we have. Bush is cutting money for housing. Meanwhile the war is being funded. It's like the people of this country be damned. A vote for McCain is a vote for Bush.

Linda: The economy is number one, although it goes without saying that if we end the war we can fix the economy. Gasoline everyone is concerned. Even if everyone cancelled their vacation it wouldn't do it.

RUTH GLOVER and ALICE WADE, retired housing assistants, NYCHA.



NYCHA. Glover: I hope the Democrats win. And I hope Clinton is the vice presidential candidate. Don't do away with Social Security, like Bush tried to do. Housing. Immigration is another big thing.

Wade: Medical.

Glover: No more cutbacks for Medicare, prescription drugs.... Improve public transportation. We can't get from place to place. The price of everything is going up.

Wade: But income isn't going up. And we have to end the war.

Glover: We need to bring the troops home. We need to take care of the people here.

ELSIE ORTIZ, retired sergeant, School

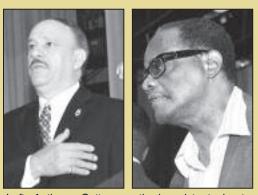
Safety. Education is first. Then health care.

Because kids are the future. They have to be educated so they will be good citizens, responsible, and help each other. Health everyone needs it. There should be health care for everyone.





Hotel waiters break into dance to the music of saxophonist Cecil Scott, a Local 237 retiree, and his band during the Resource Fair



Left: Anthony Cottone, retired assistant chapter chair and NYCHA superintendent, leads the Pledge of Allegiance; right: Ken Fox, retired shop steward and HHC cook, leads the group in singing the national anthem



Panel discussion excerpts Get Out the Senior Vote for Obama

NANCY TRUE, moderator Director, Local 237 Retiree Division

We chose the 2008 elections for today's topic because the elections provide an opportunity to change the direction of our country.

The primaries were historic. We had two historic candidates: Barack Obama, the first African American, and Hillary Clinton, the first woman, to be serious candidates for the nomination for president. Now that we have a Democratic presidential nominee, what are we going to do to get our candidate elected?

Our goal is to give you the tools, give you the facts. In previous elections, many people said, George Bush looks like someone who would be fun to have dinner with. We can't do that again. The issues are what's important. We need to get people out to vote, and to make sure that they vote for what is important to them healthcare, Social Security, the war. I know there are people here who are veterans, who have children and grandchildren who are in the armed forces now. But we have to question why we are in this war. We need a candidate who will end the war.

ED SCRIBNER Retiree Affairs Director, IBT

I've never seen a mess like this country is in, because of the Bush administration. If I made a list of everything under the Bush administration that's antiworker, antilabor, a disservice to working families, it would go on forever.

We're at a crossroads. It's not enough to talk. We need to act. Now is our chance to do something. We have to elect someone who will carry our banner. That's Obama. Our union is supporting Obama.

Seniors are the fastest growing group in the country. Seventy percent of those 65 and over vote. Last year the Retiree Affairs Department started holding statewide and multistate meetings to mobilize Teamster retirees.

They say that men won't vote for a woman, that whites and Spanish won't vote for a black man, that Hillary's supporters won't vote for Obama. That's baloney. We're going to come together.

In 2004 I thought we won in Florida. The Republicans stole the vote. In Ohio we lost more jobs than any other state, but what did they do? They made gay rights more important. They made gun control more important. We have to say, "If I vote for Obama, I vote for me." That's how it is.





Above: Panel on "The 2008 Elections: RETIREES COUNT!" (I-r): IBT Retiree Affairs Director Ed Scribner, Retiree Division Director Nancy True (moderator), Alliance for Retired Americans Government and Political Affairs Director Richard Fiesta; and Local 237 Political and

Legislation Director Pat Stryker. Left: Retiree Larry Torregiano asks panelists a question about Social Security

RICH FIESTA Director, Gov't & Political Affairs, Alliance for Retired Americans

The Alliance for Retired Americans is strong in the key battleground states. Based on a survey by Celinda Lake, our key issues—prescription drugs, Social Security, Medicare, and retirement security—are the issues that get retirees to the polls.

Social Security: McCain supports privatization. He supports Bush's plan to use Social Security funds to set up risky private savings accounts.



Medicare, prescription drugs: Your plan at Local 237 is better than Medicare



Part D, but many of you know others who use it. It has helped some people, but it's a mess. Essentially, Congress privatized part of Medicare. The government pays the private Medicare Advantage plans 12-19 percent more than they give traditional Medicare. Congress has to act by the end of this month to stop Medicare from cutting payments to doctors. Doctors may stop taking new Medicare patients because of low reimbursement rates. We say, cut the slush fund, cut the 19 percent to Medicare Advantage. [Note: Since Founders Day, the House, and then, finally, the Senate, passed a bill stopping the cuts to Medicare providers and reducing payments to the Advantage plans. The President vetoed it, and the *Congress overrode the veto—a big victory for* retirees.]

The 2003 Medicare reform law includes provisions that would turn Medicare into a privatized voucher system. We're trying to reverse that. Bills have passed in the House. In the Senate we needed 60 votes to stop the filibuster but we couldn't do it. That's why these elections are so critical to seniors. We need to elect our friends to Congress and elect a president who won't veto our bills.

This year, for the first time, both candidates are in the Senate. That means they have a voting record, we can see a clear contrast.

PAT STRYKER Local 237 Political Action & Legislation Director

Congratulations on DRIVE. Many Local 237 retirees have signed up. You make a big contribution.

People come up with reasons to vote for or not vote for a candidate that have nothing to do with their economic needs. McCain is a wolf in sheep's clothing. Everyone acknowledges his heroism as a POW. He's a charmer. He gives nice interviews. He's appealing. But who is giving him money? Who is contributing to his campaign? I represent President

Floyd at NYCERS. We had a problem with a company [NYCERS invests in] interfering with the right to organize. The NLRB found that every one of the complaints against this company was true. The head of the company, a multibillionaire, is giving to McCain.

Don't let side issues influence how you vote. We can't base our votes on that. We cannot afford to have another Republican in the White House.



2008 ELECTION CALENDAR

NATIONAL ELECTIONS	NOV. 4
Registration deadline	Oct. 10
Absentee Ballot	
Last day to postmark	
application for ballot	Oct. 28
Last day to apply in	
person for ballot	Nov. 3
Last day to postmark	
ballot	Nov. 3
CHANGE OF ADDRESS	
due at Bd.of Elections	Oct. 18
	CEPT O
NYS PRIMARY ELECTION	SEPT. 9
Registration deadline	Aug. 15
Absentee Ballot	
Last day to postmark	
application for ballot	Sept. 2
Last day to apply in	
person for ballot	Sept. 8
Last day to postmark	
ballot	Sout 8
Duilot	Sept. 8

NYC VOTER INFORMATION

1-866-VOTE-NYC (toll-free) (1-866-868-3692)www.vote.nyc.ny.us or, you can log onto www.local237.org for a link to the Board of Elections

New York City residents who do not receive an acknowledgment from the Board of Elections within 20 days after they submit their registration form should call the above number. Residents outside NYC should call 212-VOTE-NYC or your local Board of Elections.

The NYC Board of Elections is at 32 Broadway, New York, NY 10004.

FOR VOTER INFO IN OTHER STATES

Check your telephone directory for your local board of elections or the League of Women Voters: or

Go to the web site of the U.S. Election Assistance Commission at www.eac.gov/ voter for national mail voter registration forms that can be used in any state to register to vote in a federal election. There is also general voter information and information for every state.



Teamsters Marchan in the Puerto Rican Day Parade

Near recordbreaking temperatures and soaring humidity didn't wilt the Teamster spirit at the 51st Annual Puerto Rican Day Parade June 8. Dressed in sharp red, white, and blue t-shirts displaying both the United States and Puerto Rican flags, Teamsters from Local 237 in New York and Local 901 in Puerto Rico-aka "Tronquistas"— marched up Fifth Avenue from 45th Street to 86th to

the beat of the 60piece Panamanian International Marching bandimported from Brooklyn—as three million spectators cheered and waved Puerto Rican flags and banners. Union members brought their families.



strollers and teenagers who pranced up the avenue, evoking shouts and applause. Among the marchers were Local 237 retirees, including Jose and Gloria Melendez, who live in Puerto Rico and came to New York for the parade and for Founders Day two days earlier. Fortunately, the Teamsters were well-prepared for the sweltering heat with bottled water and brown-bag lunches, provided by Local 237. In photos above, top, I-r: Jose and Gloria Melendez; Angel Sanchez, pouring water on his head for relief from the heat; David Rodriguez, who was there with his daughter; center: Teamsters march behind the "Tronquistas" banner from Puerto Rico and the Local 237 banner from New York; lower, I-r: the Panamanian International Marching band; Lea Vela and Retiree Division Director Nancy True; and Cejester Walker

Save the Dates

LATINO HERITAGE CELEBRATION, Thursday, Sept. 25, 11 a.m., followed by the Retiree Division ART OPENING at 1 p.m.

ITALIAN HERITAGE CELEBRATION, Thursday, Oct. 23, 11 a.m.

FALL FOLIAGE TRIP, Thursday, Oct.30



The planning committee for the Latino Heritage Celebration is already busy. Shown here are Elsie Ortiz, Rosa Alicea, Evangelista Fabian, Donaldo Castellano, Edith Montero, Retiree Division Deputy Director Winston George, Director Nancy True, and Cejester Walker.

Summer Getaway at Kruckers





Two busloads of retirees escaped the summer heat of the city for a day at Kruckers, in Pomona, NY, where they danced, played bingo, Trivia, and other games, swam, walked around the grounds, ate, and simply talked and read near the pond

Trank Scarpinato,

former secretary-

Page 6

Former Secty-Treasurer Scarpinato Dies

treasurer and Citywide Division director of Local 237, who played a key role in the historic bridge strike of 1971, was instrumental in bringing special officers, school safety employees, and other Citywide titles into the union, and fought hard on behalf of the members, died June 11 after a short hospital stay.

Originally a sanitation superintendent at the Department of Environmental Protection, Scarpinato came to Local 237 as a business agent under then-president Barry Feinstein in the 1960s. He was promoted to Citywide director and was later elected secretarytreasurer of the local, serving in both positions for years, until 1992, when he gave up the Citywide director position.

His first project as a business agent was to organize the bridge workers, in 1965, and he succeeded. "We had to go around to different bridges and talk to the men on the different shifts," retired bridge operator Rudy Petruzzi, who joined Local 237 in 1965, recalled during an Oral History Project interview in 2003. "We met with a lot of resistance . . . but we won the vote. The guys liked Frank because he was a rough and tumble guy and most of the guys were that way. He was our mentor. . . . We got a lot of benefits. We got civil service promotional exams for different titles."

When the bridge workers went on strike in October 1971, leaving the bridges open for two days, Scarpinato was in the mid-

dle of it from the planning right up to the end. "It tied up the city of New York. Nothing moved," Petruzzi said. "It was the most successful strike in the history of the city of New York."

As Citywide director, Scarpinato helped negotiate Citywide contracts and supervised the business agents covering all of the Citywide titles in Health and Hospitals Corporation,



Board of Education, Health Department, Taxi and Limousine Commission, Police Department, and the other city agencies that employed Local 237 members, and knew many of the members well. If there was a problem, Scarpinato didn't hesitate to pick up the phone on the spot and call the head of an agency to demand that the agency do the right thing for his member. He was especially committed to the struggle to expand and upgrade the status of the union's school safety officers (now called school safety agents, under the jurisdiction of the Police Department) and special officers at HHC and other agencies.

Scarpinato retired in October 1994.

Birthday wishes to retired HPO **Ulric E. Plaskett, Sr.**, who turned 82 on May 4 . . . Congratulations to retired sr. storekeeper **Bobby Mathen**, of Atlanta, Ga., on the birth of his first grandchild, Rebecca Grace Mathew, born May 15—the same day as her grandmother.

Lance Zavin, president of the Retiree Division's Bronx community group, proudly reports that his mother, Anna Zavin, was awarded a City Council proclamation by

* * *



Councilman Jimmy Vacca in May for her lifelong volunteer work. . . Retired NYCHA housing assistant **Edward Richburg** of South Carolina has written a book, *The Night of the Crazy Baby in Eutawville, SC*, published by AuthorHouse. The book is a personal account of his murder conviction and death sentence in Eutawville, South Carolina, during the Civil Rights Movement, and the overturn of that conviction by the Supreme Court. The book can be purchased online. Thomas Leath is at the New York State Veterans Home. Cards may be sent to him there at 179 Linden Blvd., 3rd floor, Room 10, St. Albans, NY. . . . Deepest sympathy to retired NYCHA bricklayer Frank Fescine and the family of Benjamin Fescine, retired section supervisor for bricklayers and mason helpers, who worked for the Housing Authority for 31 years and died June 28 at the age of 82. His nephew, Douglas Fescine, continuing the family tradition, is also a Local 237 member and bricklayer supervisor.



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