

Network Report

February-March 2009



Gray Panthers NYC Network
244 Madison Avenue #396
New York NY 10016

telephone: 212 799 7572
web site: www.graypanthersNYC.org

February Events

Friday, February 6 -- 9 a.m.-noon

“Uncertain Tomorrow: How the Proposed City, State, and Federal Budgets Impact the Elderly”

Speakers will include **Mike Burgess**, Director New York State Office for the Aging, **Robert Blancato**, and invited elected federal and state representatives and city officials. Sponsored by the **New York Citizens' Committee on Aging**, **New York StateWide Senior Action Council**, and **1199/SEIU Retired Members Division**.

1199/SEIU Auditorium, 310 West 43rd Street, 2nd Floor (between 8th & 9th Avenues)
>>>Space is limited. Please call to RSVP: 212 353 3959

Sunday, February 22 -- 2-5 p.m.

“Housing Security in Insecure Times: Who Holds the Key?”

The new **East Side Housing Coalition**, New York State Senator **Liz Krueger**, and housing advocates including **Michael McKee** of **Tenants PAC** and **Adrienne Holder** of the **Legal Aid Society** will discuss new opportunities to expand and preserve affordable housing.

Lenox Hill Neighborhood House, 331 East 70th Street (between 1st & 2nd Avenues)
for more information: 212 490 9535 or e.sidehousingcoalition@gmail.com

No **Gray Panther membership meeting** is scheduled in February. Gray Panther members will receive notification of the **March** meeting date, time, and location.

New York Gray Panther Board meetings will be held the first Tuesday of each month from 6-8 pm, at Selis Manor, 135 West 23rd Street (between 6th & 7th Avenues).
Meeting dates: February 3, March 3, April 7, May 5, June 2

Panthers on the Prowl ...

On January 1, 2009, **Judy Lear**, became **National Chair** of the Gray Panthers. She has already participated in several teleconferences and met with Gray Panthers of South Dade Network in Miami in January. In March she will chair the National Board meeting in Las Vegas. Judy continues to be active as Convenor of the New York Network, one of the Gray Panther U.N. delegation of nine, and speaking out against budget cuts to senior programs and transportation, and against the Mayor's and City Council's decision to overthrow term limits rather than submit the issue to voter referendum.



Judy Lear

The New York network has become an organizational member of **New York StateWide Senior Action Council**.... **Miguel Ibanez** has joined the U.N. Gray Panther delegation representing us on issues confronting indigenous peoples.

Fair Share Tax Reform for New York State

Following the drastic economic events of 2008, the Gray Panthers support the **Fair Share Tax Reform** proposal to add \$5 billion a year to the New York State budget. At present, all state personal income is taxed at 6.85%. Under Fair Share, the rate would rise to 8.25% for annual income over \$250,000, and 10.30% for income over \$1 million. This would restore the progressive state taxation of past years that existed before the Pataki-era tax cuts for the rich.

In January, **Jesse Smith Campoamor** and **Claudia Chika** of the **Health Care Education Project** briefed us on Fair Share and the coalition of union, health, and social justice groups and clergy endorsing it. "While taxes for wealthy New Yorkers have decreased, their incomes have skyrocketed. We can use the money to make the critical investments we need in healthcare, mass transit and public schools.

Gray Panthers 2008



Anne Emerman, Beni Price, and Jill Gerson at Board meeting



Judy Lear and Jim Collins at anti-Iraq War demonstration



Muriel Beach, Juanita Doares, Joan Davis, and Bola Aribidesi at Gray & Green meeting

Gray Panthers 2008



Roger and Lani Sanjek at July 4th Granny Peace Brigade Speak-Out



Jack Kupferman, Marcia Goffin, and Norman Siegel at September meeting on the 2008 Election

Photographs by Judy Lear

2009 Gray Panthers NYC officers: Convener, Judy Lear; Treasurer, Marcia Goffin; Recording Secretary, Roger Sanjek; Communications Secretary, Shiuho Lin; board members, Joan Davis, Anne Emerman, Jill Gerson, Jack Kupferman, Beni Price, Mary Springer, Bob Wesner.

Gray Panthers 2008 National Convention

Joan Davis, Judy Lear, and Roger Sanjek represented the New York Gray Panthers at the national convention in Detroit, September 25-28, 2008. About seventy attended, including many from the two local Michigan networks, but also from Washington D.C., Miami, the Minnesota Twin Cities, and California groups in San Francisco, Berkeley, Contra Costa County, Sacramento, Santa Barbara, and South Bay.

Speakers included **Detroit mayor Ken Cockrel**; representatives of **Physicians for a National Health Plan**, the **Sierra Club**, the **NAACP**, and the **ACLU**; **United Automobile Workers President Ron Gettelfinger**; Gray Panther executive director **Susan Murany**; and **Dr. Robert Butler**, recovering from an injury, who summarized key ideas in his 2008 book, *The Longevity Revolution: The Benefits and Challenges of Living a Long Life*, via speaker telephone and PowerPoint. Several Detroit activists also spoke, and we all rallied outdoors to support “Turning America Around” by expanding unionization, preventing housing foreclosures, protecting the environment, and achieving universal health care.

Panthers from ten local groups, each nominated by their network, were presented **Maggie Kuhn Leadership Awards**. Roger Sanjek received one, and was introduced by Judy Lear. In all, there are now twenty-three Gray Panther local networks, plus organizing efforts or local liaisons in another nine cities and counties.

The convention delegates approved several new and revised resolutions, and selected four priority areas until the next national convention in 2012. They are:

HEALTH CARE

THE ENVIRONMENT

PEACE

HUMAN/CIVIL RIGHTS

A New President and Foreign Policy: The First Three Months

At our January meeting **Anne Emerman** shared the 2-page report of a group of Pennsylvania concerned citizens who responded to **President Barack Obama's** invitation to have a house meeting to talk about foreign policy issues. Their ideas stirred favorable response. Here are their proposals for the first three months:

- Work towards ending the Gaza blockade by Egypt and Israel.
- Restore full diplomatic relationship with Venezuela.
- Restore full diplomatic relationship with Cuba and Syria, in return asking for a good will gesture that both countries announce the release of all political prisoners and adopt higher standards of human rights.
- Initiate dialogue with Iran to restore diplomatic relations.
- Foreign secretary level meeting with North Korea and Myanmar (Burma).

Their conclusion: “We suggest that making these small steps through diplomacy and dialogue, not unilateral military actions, will begin to earn us the respect of the world again.”

Check out the National Gray Panthers website --

www.graypanthers.org



Join the Gray Panthers NYC Network

2009 Membership Form

Please print:

Date: _____

Last name _____ First Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____ Email _____

☐ \$30.00 Individual Dues

☐ \$50.00 Family or Sustaining Dues

☐ \$10.00 Student Dues

☐ Low/Fixed income - contribute whatever you can: \$ _____

☐ Additional donation for 2009: \$ _____

I want to receive meeting notices and NETWORK REPORT by:

Email: _____ U.S. Mail: _____

Make checks payable to "New York Gray Panthers Project Fund, Inc."

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Telephone: 212 799 7572 web site: www.graypanthersNYC.org

Donations to the Gray Panthers are Tax Deductible

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