

CSA Retiree Chapter Queens Regional Unit Volume 10 Spring 2026



By: Lisa Stone with a very special thank you to Dee Dee Goidel for sharing her wealth of knowledge and for guiding the writing of this article.

REMEMBERING IRWIN SHANES OUR FRIEND AND OUR MENTOR

On March 19, 2026, we said good-bye to Irwin Shanes, a founding member of our CSA union. In 1962, along with Peter O'Brien, Stanley Canter and Jack Zuckerman, the Council of Supervisors and Administrators was formed. The men shared a common belief that the CSA Union was to provide benefits to all members and have an active role in collective bargaining.

Irwin was always a man with a vision. In the spring of 1965, Irwin was able to establish the welfare fund that we all benefit from today. Irwin's background in medicine gave him the foresight to recognize the importance for this fund for all members throughout their lives. (Continued on page 2)



REMEMBERING IRWIN SHANES OUR FRIEND AND OUR MENTOR (cont)

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Irwin knew that we had to look beyond and fought for a program for in service and retirees, and was successful. Eventually in later years he became the administrator of the Welfare Fund. Irwin was there to support all members about these benefits for the rest of his life. He was a wealth of knowledge which he willingly shared with all who knew him.

Irwin always supported having a CSA Retiree Chapter throughout his time working for CSA. Jill Levy was voted in as the new president of CSA in 2000. Jill recognized that Irwin was a knowledgeable, respected member who saw the need for a retiree chapter and asked Irwin to create a slate to run to become the first president of the retiree chapter. He complied and in 2004 won by a margin of 3 to 1. Irwin believed there should be three goals for the retiree chapter – to remain politically active, to be socially and culturally active, and to provide continued outreach to all retirees for support with their benefits.

Irwin was an active executive board member of our Queens Regional Unit up until the end. He was well respected by all for not only the kind, benevolent man he was, but for his hard work in providing for all our futures. It is important to remember the hard work that it took to get to where we are with all our union has to offer and who we have to thank. It is also important that we work hard to keep what he originally established for us for now and future generations.

CSA has created a scholarship fund in Irwin Shanes' name to target New York City high school students who are enrolled in career and technical education programs. (Irwin was a principal of a 600 school).

Donations to this fund may be made as follows:

Donation check payable to: The Irwin Shanes CSA Scholarship Fund
Mail your check to the attention of Mark Brodsky
Council of School Supervisors and Administrators
40 Rector Street – 12th Floor
New York, New York 10006-1729



MEET OUR CSA LEADERSHIP AND QUEENS RETIREES TEAMS

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CSA RETIREE CHAPTER

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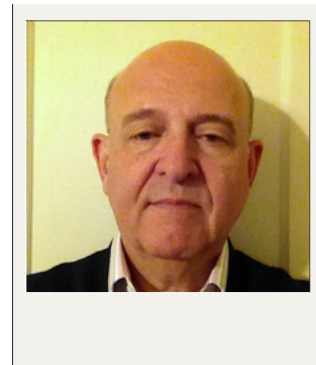
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Lilian Garelick
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c=coordinator

FROM THE DESK OF OUR UNIT LEADER, LEONARD B. STERMAN

I am pleased to report that the Queens Regional Unit is continuing to grow and thrive with over 300 members. On April 23rd, we held our annual general membership meeting at The inn At New Hyde Park. Our guest speakers were First Vice President CSA, Stamo Karalazarides, New York Senator Toby Stavitsky, Deputy Queens Borough President Ebony Young, and New York Assemblywomen Nily Rozac. There were over 80 members that attended the meeting. The



food, service and collegiality were wonderful! Some new members were pleased to socialize with former colleagues they haven't seen for years.

Please note - our annual luncheon meeting has already been booked, it will again be at Terrace On the Park, on Wednesday, October 7, 2026, so save the date!

Our events and activities committee has been busy scheduling monthly activities. We are continuing with Tai Chi sessions led by our own Lois Lee. A number of members are excited about this offering. The committee will be scheduling other events in the future, just check your email and or our website – www.csaqueens.org.

The Queens Unit will continue offering chair yoga classes weekly on Wednesdays as well as Bridge classes. Now that Spring has arrived we will resume our Walking Club Also, our Book Club meets monthly on Mondays. A list of upcoming selections to be discussed is posted on our website. We've been keeping members informed about current matters via email. Informational updates are posted frequently, so make sure to check it periodically. If you haven't renewed your 2026 Unit membership please do so now. Our membership year runs the calendar year. In order to receive reduced rates for activities you must be a current member. A membership renewal form can be downloaded from our website – www.csaqueens.org.

I want to encourage you to always socialize with family and friends whenever and where ever possible. Attending our various events is an excellent opportunity to reconnect with former colleagues and make new friends. Human interaction has been a proven way to maintain mental sharpness.

Be well and stay safe!

Fraternally,
Len



**INTRODUCING OUR QUEENS ASSISTANT POLITICAL DIRECTOR
VINCENT SURACI**

My name is Vincent Suraci. In February 2025, I retired after 33 years of service to the children and families of NYC. For 20 of those years, I had the privilege of serving as principal of Stephen A. Halsey JHS 157 in Rego park, Queens.

I now serve as the CSA Assistant Political Director for Queens. I work with a dedicated team of assistant political directors from each borough under the supervision of Ms. Mable Sarduy, CSA Director of Political & External Affairs.

My responsibilities include:

- Support the implementation of legislative and policy priorities at the city, state, and federal levels
 - Track and analyze legislation, budget proposals, and policy developments impacting public education
 - Assist in coordinating Advocacy Days, legislative visits, and meetings with elected officials
 - Build and maintain relationships with elected officials, community leaders, and partner organizations
 - Represent CSA at public meetings, hearings, and community events
 - Coordinate external events such as forums, meet-and-greets, and stakeholder briefings
 - Support coalition-building efforts with aligned organizations and advocacy groups
 - Attend representing CSA in elected fund raisers approved by President
 - Assist in developing and executing political engagement strategies, including endorsements and outreach efforts
 - Coordinate communication with political liaisons and members regarding key initiatives
 - Support voter engagement and civic participation efforts (e.g., GOTV initiatives, candidate forums)
 - Maintain tracking systems for political outreach and engagement
 - Prepare briefing materials for leadership meetings with elected officials
 - Develop clear, concise messaging to support advocacy
 - Manage logistics for events, meetings, and advocacy activities
 - Maintain databases of elected officials, stakeholders, and partners
 - Track deadlines for legislative sessions, budget cycles, and reporting requirements
 - Support internal coordination across departments to align advocacy efforts
- I look forward to advancing and promoting CSA's core values of leadership, equity, and collaboration for our members.

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UPDATES FROM NORMAN SHERMAN - volume 17 #3

1. Medicare Vision Coverage

Medicare provides limited coverage, focusing primarily on medically necessary care rather than routine eye care. Medicare covers most eye-related medical issues, such as diagnostic tests for eye problems and treatment of eye diseases.

Unfortunately, Medicare does not cover routine eye exams or eyeglasses. This means having an eye exam to update a prescription for glasses is not covered.

Under Medicare Part B, Medicare will cover some preventative and diagnostic eye exams, such as:

1. Yearly Diabetic-Related Exam for patients with diabetes or ocular disease symptoms (covered whether conducted by an ophthalmologist or optometrist).
2. Yearly Glaucoma Screening Tests for people at high risk for glaucoma. You are at high risk if you have diabetes, a family history of glaucoma, are an African American 50 or older, or a Hispanic American 65 or older. The screening must be done or supervised by a doctor certified to perform it in your state.
3. Macular Degeneration - certain diagnostic tests and treatment of the disease, including injections. Those receiving treatment must have age-related macular degeneration (AMD).
4. Cataract Surgery – Medicare will cover traditional surgery or laser (if medically necessary) surgery, including standard intraocular lens implants. It also covers a pair of standard eyeglasses or contact lenses after surgery. Upgraded frames are not covered. The eyeglass provider must also be a Medicare-approved supplier to qualify.
5. Eye Injuries or Infections

The CSA Retiree Welfare Fund also reimburses laser vision correction \$500 once in a lifetime and multi-focus lens (after cataract surgery) \$500 per eye once in a lifetime.

2. Medicare Care Coverage for Emergency and Urgent Care

Sometimes, you may unexpectedly encounter a medical situation, such as an accident or illness, that requires both emergency and/or urgent care. The good news is that Medicare covers both services.

Under Original Medicare, emergency care is covered throughout the U.S.A. This includes conditions such as chest pain, severe bleeding, or signs of stroke, where immediate medical attention is required. Part B covers the cost after you meet the deductible of \$50.

Urgent care, which is less severe than emergencies, is when a condition requires medical attention, but is not critical. Examples include minor infections, sprains, or flu-like symptoms that cannot wait for a doctor's appointment. Medicare Part B will pay for the visit, provided the Urgent Care facility accepts Medicare.

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It is important to understand the difference between Emergency Care and Urgent Care, as it can directly affect your out-of-pocket expenses. Additionally, while Medicare covers services nationwide, coverage outside of the U.S. is limited, with only a few exceptions. I write about them in a future Update. (Continued on Page 8)

WELCOME TO RETIREMENT

FINALLY FREE

**No alarm clocks blaring at the break of dawn,
No commute while half-asleep and withdrawn.
Pajamas 'til noon? That's perfectly fine,
Every hour of the day is officially mine.**

**Laundry can wait, dishes can too,
I might take a nap – there's nothing to do !
Netflix, a puzzle, or snacks in my bed,
Whatever I want, no more rushing ahead.**

**So here's to the freedom of taking it slow,
No emails, no stress, just go with the flow.
I've earned this time, it's my victory,
Cheers to the good life – finally free!**

Anonymous

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL OF OUR NEWLY RETIRED MEMBERS.

We plan events/activities each month. Please see below for this past year's events and activities:

Fall and Spring General Membership Meetings
Nassau County Museum of Art
Luncheon at Seventh St. Cafe
Flight or Fight Presentation at QCC
Medicare and What it Covers - Zoom Workshop
Lunar New Year Luncheon
Bayside Historical Society /Fort Totten
Old Westbury Gardens Tour
Chair Yoga with Suzanne - Wednesdays
Bridge for Advanced Players
The Book Club - Meets Monthly
Tia Chi & Qi Gong
Walking Club

Visit our website for updates and future events/activities.

OUR WEBSITE IS: CSAQUEENSRETIRES@AOLCOM

WE VALUE YOUR INPUT. PLEASE TAKE OUR SURVEY BY CLICKING THIS LINK:

<https://forms.gle/nXfGsAnh4gcRVSLk6>



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3. Question of the Month

Q. I am a retired member and bought glasses from a GVC participating provider. I recently received \$65 from the CSA Retiree Chapter, but I never received \$150 (glasses cost \$326) from the CSA Retiree Welfare Fund.

A. To begin, the CSA Welfare Fund no longer issues your \$150 reimbursement. Members must submit out-of-network claims directly to GVS (this form can be found on the CSA Welfare Fund website) or, if a member utilizes an in-network provider, the \$150 benefit is applied to the cost of the visit and/or glasses. The CSA Welfare Fund then automatically issues up to \$65 in reimbursement for those who belong to the Retiree Chapter – members do not need to submit anything to the Fund for the additional chapter reimbursement.

Have a great and safe day!

Norm Sherman

Florida CSA Retiree Chapter Liaison & Outreach Coordinator

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