Director’s Column

Welcome to 2020! Did anyone besides me think that by the time the calendar read 2020 we would have flying cars and mind-reading devices? Well, cars don’t fly, but they are almost self-driving and the eerily accurate Google that follows me around the internet reminding me of everything I looked at in the past three days is kind of like a mind reader. Anyway, good wishes for the start of what I hope to be a prosperous, fun and successful year for each of you and your families.

In order to help you accomplish this, I am offering a complete overview of the benefits you get as a retiree through Local 1180. Oftentimes, retirees only use the benefits they are familiar with and omit others that they are eligible for simply due to the fact they lack knowledge of those benefits — and because no one really wants to read a huge benefit book. Keep this list handy so you and/or your registered dependents can make appropriate choices in the moment a benefit need or question arises.

**General Medical Benefit:** Reimbursement up to $1,200 per family per calendar year for out-of-pocket expenses such as deductibles and copayments. Medicare premiums and deductibles are expected to increase in 2020, so this is important to use.

**Prescription Drug Benefit:** Reimbursement up to $1,500 per family per calendar year for expenses related to covered prescription and optional drug riders.

**Dental Coverage:** Up to $2,000 per individual per calendar year for dental, with four plans to choose from.

**Optical Benefit:** Up to $125 per pair of prescription glasses; maximum one pair per year per eligible member.

**Mental Health Benefit:** Up to $300 a year per person for individual counseling/out-of-hospital psychiatric and mental health treatment.

**Hearing Aid Benefit:** Up to $600 per person every two years.

**Podiatry Benefit:** Up to $10 a visit for four visits per year.

**Legal Services Benefit:** Comprehensive legal services up to $1,000 per year.

**Individual Benefit Counseling Service & Referral:** Meet with 1180 benefit representative to better understand benefits; directs you to appropriate agencies as needed/required.

**Retiree Division:** Comprehensive benefit and recreational program that offers retirees discounted events, benefit meetings, luncheons, and trips.

Additionally...

**New Medicare deductibles** are in place beginning January and will be increased to $198. The City of New York Health Benefits Program reimburses Medicare-eligible retirees and their Medicare-eligible dependents for any Medicare Part B premiums (excluding any penalties) paid during the calendar year.

**NYS Department of Taxation** offers seniors school tax exemptions and property tax relief. Check with your local assessor’s office for the forms. Get in on this at the beginning of the year for the most benefit.

As I stated last month, now is also the time to take a look at your dental and prescription drug utilization from last year for you and your dependents and determine what you think you might expect for 2020. No one can see the future, but speak with your doctors and make requests for generic drugs and to develop treatment plans for the health and wellness conditions that you do know about. If you have any questions understanding these benefits come by the Retiree Division during one of the Retiree Benefit Overviews, Retiree Benefit Coffee Circle or any benefit workshop and we’ll be sure to help you. Wishing you a wonderful new year!
Projects with Your PC. A New Project Every Week
Mondays, Jan. 6, 13, 27 | 10 a.m. – Noon
Week 1: Know where packages are that you ordered or sent.
Week 2: Share your photos/videos with the wider world. Week 3: Make video calls with WhatsApp on your PC and your smartphone.

Your Mac and You — Getting Creative and Having FUN with Your Apple Computer
Mondays, Jan. 6, 13, 27 | 1 p.m. – 3 p.m.
Finally, a class just for Mac users! You’ll learn the Mac way of doing things (much simpler than Windows), including email, photos, and iCloud. Discover the cool apps that come FREE with your Mac, including Safari, Mail, Pages, Photos, and iMovie.

How to Talk, Text, Transit, Travel & Take Photos with Your Android Smartphone
Tuesdays, Jan. 7, 14, 21, 28 | 10 a.m. – Noon
Ok, you the know “talk” part, but do you know how to conference call? Group text? Exact time MTA buses will arrive? Call, text and email while overseas? Take and share GOOD pictures? Not really? This is the class you need.

Take Control: Get the Most From Your iPhone & iPad
Tuesdays, Jan. 7, 14, 21, 28 | 1 p.m. – 3 p.m.
How to setup your device and get started using FaceTime, email, and iMessage, taking and sharing photos, navigating with Maps, using iCloud and Find-my-iPhone, Apple Music, podcasts, voice memos and more cool stuff in the App Store.

Yoga
Tuesdays, Jan. 21, 28 | 11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
Join the yoga classes to improve and maintain your mobility, strength and flexibility.

Dance with Margaret
Tuesdays, Jan. 21, 28 | 1 p.m. – 2 p.m.
Come and try it. You’ll be glad you did!

Stretch with Irene
Tuesdays, Jan. 7, 21, 28 | 2 p.m. – 3 p.m.
You will gain a greater range of motion, strength and flexibility! Come to feel your best!

Art of Walking
Wednesdays, Jan. 8, 22, 29 | 2 p.m. – 3 p.m.
This popular class adds fun to maintaining good posture and walking skills that benefit your body and mind.

Zumba
Fridays, Jan. 10, 24, 31 | 10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
Dance and move with aerobic actions choreographed to all types of music. It’s fitness and a dance party all in one.

Stretch and Tone with Irene
Fridays, Jan. 10, 24, 31 | 11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
Gain a greater range of motion, strength and flexibility.

Line Dancing with Phoenix
Fridays, Jan. 10, 24, 31 | 2 p.m. – 3 p.m.
Get fit using choreographed group steps and dance, like the Electric Slide.

Do-It-Yourself Computer Maintenance Tips So You Don’t Have to Call the Geek Squad
Wednesday, Jan. 15 | 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
Is your computer running slow? Are strange things showing up on your screen? Learn how to clean out the junk that your computer’s been accumulating, and protect against malware and viruses — for free.

Use Email With Confidence & Without Confusion Part 1
Wednesday, Jan. 22 | 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
Learn how to block and remove spam/junk mail, clear out that pile of unread messages, organize your mail into folders, the correct way to forward a message, how to send messages to groups, and how to use auto responders.

Use Email With Confidence & Without Confusion Part 2
Wednesday, Jan. 29 | 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
In Part 2, we cover how to protect yourself from junk-mailers and harassers using email aliases. But the BIG topics will be sending webpage links, attaching documents, and the best way to send multiple photos with your email.

Wishing everyone a Happy New Year!
Come Out of the Cold for a Cup of Vegetable Soup
Monday, Jan. 6 | Noon - 1:00 p.m.
It’s cold outside but warm inside the Retiree Division. Stop by, say hi, and enjoy a warm cup of vegetable soup.

Broadway Show Musical – Tina
Wednesday, Jan. 8 | 2:00 p.m.
From humble beginnings in Nutbush, Tenn. to her transformation into the global queen of Rock ‘n’ Roll, Tina Turner didn’t just break the rules, she rewrote them! This new stage musical reveals the untold story of a woman who dared to defy the bounds of her age, gender, and race. More than two dozen songs, including Proud Mary, Private Dancer, What’s Love Got To Do with it, and many more great hits will entertain and enthral everyone. Lunt-Fontanne Theatre, 205 W. 46th St. Orchestra Seats: $100. Must pick up tickets in advance.

Frames Bowling
Friday, Jan. 10 | 12:45 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

A Day of Remembrance of Dr. King
Friday, Jan. 17 | 11:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
In recognition of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King’s great achievements, join us for a birthday celebration in his honor at the Retiree Division. Refreshments served.

Restaurant Club: Nick Stef’s
Fridays, Jan. 24 & 31 | 1 p.m.
Voted “one of the Top 10 best steakhouses in New York City,” Nick & Stef’s is a masterful blend of ultra-stylish contemporary design and time-honored steakhouse artistry. Location: 9 Penn Plaza, 33rd Street & 8th Avenue. Price Pre-Fixed: $40

Benefit Questions & Answers
Monday, Jan. 6 | 10:30 a.m. — Noon
A workshop for the retiree who has questions about supplemental benefits, reimbursements, or Medicare. You ask the questions and we give you the right answers. If you are a recent retiree, this is a great seminar to attend.

Retiree Benefit Overview: Prescription & General Medical Reimbursement
Monday, Jan. 13 | 10:30 a.m. - Noon
It is that time of year again! Are you ready to file? Do you have questions about what is required? Come and learn what you need for the reimbursement. Lynda and Indra will show you step by step how to get your papers in order.

Benefit Coffee Circle
Friday, Jan. 31 | 10:30 a.m. - Noon
Come have coffee, donuts and a lively discussion about Medicare, new retirement, prescription drugs, and supplemental benefits! Coffee and assorted donuts served.

Benefit Reimbursement Appointments
Monday, Jan. 27 | Tuesday, Jan. 14
Wednesdays, Jan. 22 & 29 | Thursday, Jan. 16
10 a.m. - Noon
Please call the Retiree Division at 212.226.5800 to schedule your appointment to have your paperwork reviewed for accuracy. Please bring your paperwork ready for review when you arrive for your appointment. You should have the following documents:
- Claim forms (if you do not have them, let us know when you arrive for your appointment)
- Sorted pension statements
- Prescription histories in date order and copies (they must be clear and completely readable to submit)

PLEASE have all statements out of the envelopes; we cannot open your statements.
PLEASE remove all staples; use paper clips only to keep papers together.
Is all of this too much for you?
1. Just collect your papers.
2. Take everything out of the envelopes.
3. Unfold them.
4. Paperclip all of the same things together.
5. Bring them in and we’ll help you.

If you choose to “walk in” to turn in your papers, just remember that staff lunch hours run from Noon – 2:00 p.m.

Local 1180 Supplemental Benefit Reimbursement
Retirees have until Tuesday, June 30, 2020, to file for your reimbursement for eligible expenses incurred in 2019. Start gathering your paperwork now.
Not sure what you need? Go to www.cwa1180.org/retirees

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Office Closed
Wednesday, Jan. 1 — New Year’s Day
Monday, Jan. 20 — Martin Luther King Jr. Day
**Photography Trip to Yonkers: Hudson River Museum & a Huge Doll House**  
**Thursday, Jan. 9 | 10:30 a.m. Meeting Time**

This beautiful museum is a unique mesh of the old and new. The main building displays art inspired by the Hudson River. A few steps take you back in time to 1877 in the attached Glenview historic home featuring six period rooms, including the 24-room Victorian dollhouse, Nybelwyck Hall. For more information, go to www.hrm.org

Metro-North Getaways package deal includes roundtrip rail fare to museum and admission: $18.50 (adults), $15.50 (seniors). For lunch, we’ll return to the Yonkers waterfront for our favorite Yonkers Brewing Company.

**Meet at 10:30 a.m. at Grand Central Station.** Purchase the Hudson River Museum package at the ticket office. Take the 10:58 a.m. train to Glenwood (we will exit the train in Yonkers), and then the No. 1 Bee-Line Bus to the museum. Bus accepts MetroCards. Return trip: 4:29 p.m. to Grand Central.

**Photography Trip: Crossing the Verrazano Narrows to Staten Island Mall and Primark**  
**Thursday, Jan. 30 | 10:30 a.m. Meeting Time**

The largest indoor mall on Staten Island has undergone a remodeling and upscaling, adding stores unique to NYC. International travelers know and love Primark, and now you don’t have to take a bus to Boston, or a plane to London, for its quality clothing at discount prices. There are plenty of sights to photograph and lots to eat in the huge food court. Plus, instead of the ferry, we’re taking the express bus for amazing views on the Verrazano Bridge.

**Meet 10:30 a.m. at Broadway & 13th Street** near Union Square Station. Take the 10:45 a.m. SIM4C Bus to Staten Island. Fare each way: $6.75 (Half-fare for seniors). **Pay-per-ride MetroCards ONLY**. Buses accept cash IN COINS ONLY (no pennies). Trip time: 1 hour.

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**New Event Registration Call Line**

To register for an event, call the Retiree Division Event registration line at 212.331.0935. Leave your name, phone number, and the events you wish to register for on the answering line. You will receive a call back to confirm your registration and remind you of any payment that is due. Please be sure to speak slowly and clearly. This is the fastest, easiest, and best way to sign up for our events.

**Good News About the ELEVATORS**

We are pleased to announce that the elevator to the lower level is up and running. All operations are back to normal.

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**Checks or money orders for events should be mailed to:**

CWA Local 1180 Retiree Division  
97 Hudson Street, New York, NY 10013

You must call to RSVP for all events  
**212.331.0935**

All payments for events must be made prior to event.

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**PLEASE CALL TO CONFIRM EVENTS DURING INCLEMENT WEATHER**

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**UPDATE on Union’s EEO Payouts & Contract**

Local 1180 is pleased to announce that we have settled our PAA et al contract with the City and that payments to Administrative Managers in the EEO settlement were made in December. Although two completely separate and unrelated events, they just happened to occur at approximately the same time. Updates on both can be found on our website at www.cwa1180.org right on the homepage.

**Contract:** If you retired after May 2018, then you should call the Staff Representative for the agency you worked at when you were employed. If you retired prior to May 2018, the contract settlement does not apply to you.

**EEO Settlement:** Checks started going out Dec. 16, 2019, to Admin Managers who were part of the settlement. If you do not receive yours, please contact your agency to see where the check was mailed. Only those retirees who were eligible and filed the paperwork that was sent to them will be entitled to a check. All other questions, call the Local at 212.226.6565.