

Syracuse Elfun Society

2025 Fall Newsletter

Chairman's Column

As I've mentioned before, fall is my favorite season. The colors are richer, and the weather is just right. To me, it's easier to put on a sweater than deal with the heat of the summer we just had. This year, we've enjoyed shows at the Rev and Cortland Repertory theaters, and by the time you read this, we'll have taken a pontoon boat ride on the Erie Canal to celebrate its 200th anniversary. Before you know it, we'll be gathering at Tassone's Wine Garden for our annual holiday party. I hope to see you there. These events are excellent opportunities to catch up with friends you don't see often. I should mention that we're looking for a Vice President, Secretary, and at-large members to fill open positions on our Board of Directors. Consider joining our team. As always, I'm open to your thoughts. Reach out to me at carlchermak@gmail.com.

Farewell Fred

The Syracuse Elfun Society board and the entire chapter bid a fond farewell to our Senior Representative Fred Wenthien. Fred was a long-time member of the chapter, and active on the building projects. No matter what tool was needed, we could count on Fred to bring it to the work site. We honored him as our Elfun of the Year in 2014. We were fortunate to have him join the board in 2016 and assume the role of Senior Representative in 2019. Many bereaved Elfun families have received a kind note from Fred, on behalf of the chapter. Thank you, Fred, for all you have done for the chapter itself and for the many local organizations for which you were an integral part of the work crew. We will miss you.

Syracuse Football Fan



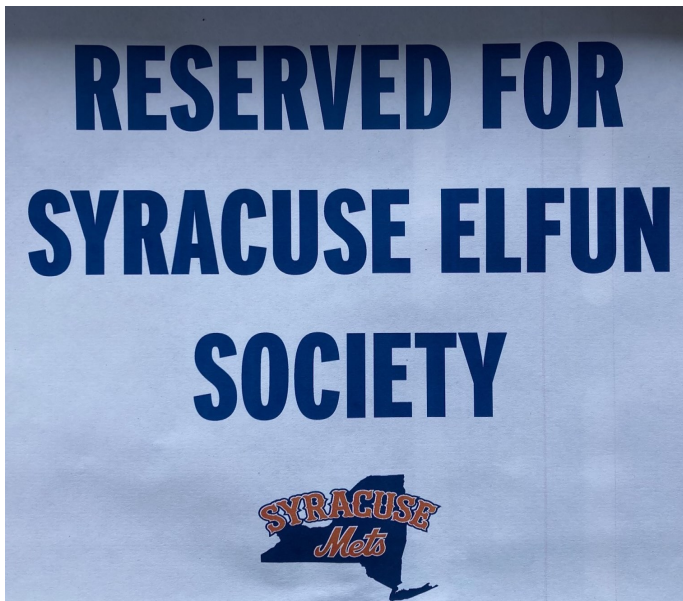
Recently, a local media outlet in Syracuse featured a short story about one of our members, Lou Ragonese, who has been a Syracuse University football fan for 70 years. If you would like to see that article, click on the following link <https://www.localsyr.com/news/local-news/syracuse-football-superfan-of-70-years-looking-forward-to-the-season/>

State Street Investment Management

Many of us have Elfun Funds in our portfolio and receive mail from State Street Global Advisors, the investment banking company that manages the ELFUN Funds. State Street Global Advisors has been rebranded as State Street Investment Management. In the future, your communications may start coming from State Street Investment Management. In the meantime, if you have any questions, or to obtain a prospectus, call them at 1-800-242-0134.

Social Events

Elfun Family Day at the Ballpark July 13



92 degrees and high humidity made for a sweltering day as 60 intrepid Syracuse Elfuns and family members gathered on Sunday, July 13th, at NBT Bank Stadium to watch the Mets host the Lehigh Valley IronPigs. Despite the heat, it was a delight to see each other, our adult children, and our grandchildren. The lucky grandkids 12 and under enjoyed a free hot dog, soda, popcorn and ice cream. The Taco Bell K-Man struck out, so we all won a free taco. Whoopee. We witnessed a home run by Francisco Alvarez in the 4th and made it to the 6th inning before the rain came. The Mets were leading 4 to 0 when the game was called, and we all went home happy. Thank you, Mets, for hosting us each season in the Left Field Terrace.

"The Little Mermaid" at Cortland Repertory Theater and Dinner at Bob's Barbeque August 6

Our "casual" event was a fun and entertaining outing. "The Little Mermaid" may be less renowned and geared toward a younger audience than the performances our group usually favors. But the beautiful venue, in the middle of a park, seating only

240, was the perfect place to spend a summer afternoon. It was nice to see so many families and young children in the audience. All were mesmerized by the music, colorful costumes, and superior physical comedy. The intimate seating allowed us to see every sequin on the costumes and feel the floor reverberate as the dancers performed their steps. Among our group, some loved Sebastian the Crab, others Scuttle the seagull. Speaking of seagulls, it was a first to see an entire flock of seagulls perform a tap dance routine! In the end, the mermaid got her prince, and all was well.



Following the performance, we enjoyed a Dutch treat dinner at Bob's Barbeque. It was fun to discuss our favorite moments in the show, and a real treat when the actress who played Ursula the villain sea witch (still in her green glitter makeup) dined next to us and expressed her appreciation for our attendance at the play.

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Erie Canal Cruise September 18



Our group of 17 cruised along the canal at a leisurely 4-5 mph, the same speed at which those 200 years ago would have been pulled by the mules. Back then, travel stopped at 1am, 7am, 1pm and 7pm to rest and feed mules; otherwise, the mules were led along the towpath by 10-17-year-old children, many of them orphans recruited from orphanages in NYC. Apparently, mules were well suited to this task, as horses tended to jump and run when frightened, whereas mules tended to stay still. With no refrigeration, those on the packet boats bought fresh provisions along the canal. Enterprising farmers who lived along the waterway were happy to supply needed goods, as it did not require a trip to the market. Fresh edibles were thrown into the packet boats, and payment, in coin, was embedded into potatoes which were thrown to shore. It sounds like a brutal trip, but this 6-day trip from NYC to Buffalo was far superior to the 6-week trip by horse and wagon. We learned that, because the Appalachian Mountains were such a significant barrier, the Erie Canal and associated waterways were a prime pathway from NYC to the heartland of America, carrying goods, people, news, and ideas as our nation expanded to the west. It is a privilege to have this essential part of history so connected to our home area.

Holiday Luncheon December 11

Tassone's Wine Garden in Baldwinsville will host us for a buffet luncheon. We have not held an event there, so this will be a first for us. Parking is at the front door, the lovely back room involves only a step or two, and the food looks to be delicious. Our holiday buffet includes chef salad, fruit bowl, roast chicken, roast beef, potatoes, chef's choice vegetable, ziti and meatballs, coffee, tea, soda and dessert. Over the past three holiday lunches we have awarded a Christmas cactus as a door prize. All three happy recipients report their plant continues to flourish. You will want to attend the luncheon just to have the opportunity to win the cactus. This is early enough in the month that we hope it does not interfere with your other holiday plans. The flyer is attached; save the date, gather your Elfun friends, make your reservation, and most importantly, do not schedule any medical appointments on December 11.

Broadway in the Finger Lakes 2026

A poll of the regular attendees indicates that Rogers and Hammerstein's "Carousel", running from August 12-29, will be our first choice. Our tentative date is Wednesday August 19. Watch for a confirmed date and registration details in early 2026. With your Elfun friends "You'll Never Walk Alone".

Casual Luncheons in 2026

As our Chapter membership ages, our social event options decrease. We began testing more "casual" outings in 2025, and based on that response, will plan to arrange a monthly casual Dutch treat lunch. We will wait until our snowbirds return in April or May of 2026 with a casual lunch coupled with our annual meeting. Let's look for a new and interesting restaurant each month; send any recommendations to Cindy. The Syracuse Chapter is proud to be one of the few remaining Elfun Chapters. We have long since outlasted Schenectady! So, let's keep our Chapter vibrant with some monthly get-togethers in 2026.



IN MEMORIAM

We have been saddened to learn of the deaths of the following current or former members of the Syracuse Elfun Society:

- Milton Lawrence Fuller, 93, died July 7, 2024. Military honors were rendered Thursday, September 12, 2024, at the Onondaga County Veterans Memorial Cemetery Chapel.
- James D. Parkman, age 82, of Baldwinsville, NY, passed away on December 27, 2024. He is survived by the love of his life, Marjorie Gavin.
- Anne F. Milne, 62, of Camillus, NY, formerly of Lincoln and Concord, MA, passed away April 15, 2025. As co-leader of the GE Volunteer Syracuse Area Council, Anne ran GE Volunteer Projects, working with multiple non-profit organizations.
- William W. "Bill" Sherman, 93, formerly of Fayetteville, NY, passed away on August 19, 2025.
- Robert A. Taylor passed away on August 21, 2025, at Waukesha Memorial Hospital in Waukesha, WI, at the age of 93.
- Fred Z. Neff, 85, of Baldwinsville, NY, passed away on September 3, 2025. Fred enjoyed a 35-year career in engineering and management with General Electric and later Lockheed Martin, working in Utica, Valley Forge, and Syracuse.
- Milton L. Noble, 95, formerly of Liverpool, NY and previously residing in Baldwinsville, NY, passed away on Sunday, September 14, 2025, at Kingsway Arms Nursing Center in Schenectady, NY.
- Robert (Bob) H. Blake of Windham, NH, formerly of Onondaga Hill, passed away peacefully on Sept. 18, 2025, at The Residence at Freeman Lake in No. Chelmsford, MA.

Note: Since it is not possible for the board of directors to keep tabs on all member passings, especially when the notices weren't in the local Syracuse Post Standard, we request that, if you are aware of a member passing, please notify a board member so we can include the announcement in our newsletter. Thanks.

Syracuse Elfun Society Board of Directors

www.syracuseelfunsociety.org

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Secretary	open		
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