

PghASR NEWSLETTER

Mark Your Calendars!



PghASR
Holiday

Luncheon

RIVERS CASINO

11:30 A.M.

Tuesday, December 8, 2015

(See page 3 for details.)



2015 Calendar of Events

Thursday, November 12

Region 12 Executive Board Meeting
9:30-12:00, Eat'n Park, Waterfront, Homestead

Tuesday, December 8

PghASR Annual Holiday Luncheon
Rivers Casino, Ohio Room
11:30, Awards
12:00, Lunch

2016 Calendar of Events

Thursday, March 17

PghASR Executive Board Meeting
10:00-1:00, Eat'n Park, Waterfront, Homestead

Tuesday, March 22

Region 12 Executive Board Meeting
Time and Location TBA

Tuesday, April 5

PghASR Benefits & Services Event
CRATE, Greentree Road
11:30, See page 5 for details.

April 2016

Health Care Options Seminar and Lunch
Time and Location TBA

Thursday, May 19

PASR Region 12 Spring Luncheon
Host, Allegheny Chapter
Location TBA
10:30, Officers/Committee Chairs Meeting
11:00, Meet and Greet
11:30, Region 12 meeting
12:00, Lunch, followed by speaker

Thursday, June 9

Gen. Membership/Benefits & Services Meeting
Rock Bottom Brewery, Waterfront, Homestead
11:00, Meet and Greet
11:30, Awarding of scholarships
12:00, Luncheon, followed by speaker

Thursday, July 28

Region 12 Executive Board Meeting
Time and location TBA

Thursday, August 18

Lunch Bunch
11:30, Rivers Casino Buffet

Thursday, August 25

PghASR Executive Board Meeting
10:00-1:00, Eat'n Park, Waterfront, Homestead

Tuesday, September 13

PASR Region 12 Fall Luncheon
Host, Pittsburgh Chapter
Location TBA
10:30, Officers/Committee Chairs Meeting
11:00, Meet and Greet
11:30, Region 12 meeting
12:00, Lunch, followed by speaker

Wednesday, September 28

PghASR Retirees Reception
10:00, Eat'n Park, 70s Room, Waterfront

2016 Calendar of Events cont.

Wednesday, October 12

PghASR Executive Board Meeting
10:00-1:00, Eat'n Park, Waterfront, Homestead

Sunday-Tuesday, October 16-18

PASR Leadership Development Conference

Thursday, November 3

Gen. Membership/Benefits & Services Meeting
Location TBA
12:00, Luncheon, followed by speaker

Tuesday, November 15

Region 12 Executive Board Meeting
Time and Location TBA

Wednesday, December 7, 2016

PghASR Annual Holiday Luncheon
Location TBA
11:30, Awards
12:00, Lunch

The calendar, reservation forms, membership renewal form and other information can be found on the PghASR website. See the inside back cover for information on how to access the site.



PghASR Welcomes Its New Members!

(as of October 18, 2015))

| | |
|----------------------|------------------|
| Faith Bartley | Marianne Oconnor |
| John Busch | Kathleen Pitzer |
| William Gallagher | Irene Reid |
| Rana Grossman Tonti | Ronald Reid |
| Sylbia Kunst | Terrence Russell |
| Raymond Morton | Lynne Woodward |
| Brenda Newring Gibbs | |

When You Move ...

Be sure to notify the following agencies of your new address as soon as possible:

Pittsburgh Association of School Retirees (PghASR), P.O. Box 9056, Pittsburgh, PA 15224

Pennsylvania School Employees Retirement System (PSERS), 5 N. 5th Street, Harrisburg, PA 17101

***Pittsburgh Insurance & Retirement Benefits Office**, Board of Public Education, 341 S. Bellefield Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15213

*Questions about retirement benefits should be directed to PSERS. Call toll free 1-888-773-7748 or 1-717-787-8540 or contact the local office at 900 Sarah St., Pittsburgh, PA 15203, 412-488-2031. The Insurance and Benefits Office of the School District does not have information about PSERS.

CUT OUT AND KEEP THIS HANDY GUIDE TO IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

Here is a quick reference guide to important phone numbers for PghASR members.

PSERS (Penna. School Employees Retirement System): 1-888-773-7748

PASR (Pennsylvania Association of School Retirees):

1-717-697-7077 pasr@pasr.org

Pittsburgh Public Schools Insurance & Benefits Office: 412-622-3692

PASR-endorsed Dental & Vision Plans Professional Insurance Services: 1-800-382-1352, ext. 3012

HOP (Health Options Program) Insurance:

1-800-773-7725, www.HOPbenefits.com

Do you have any suggestions for the Newsletter? Contact PghASR by email at pghpasr@yahoo.com or by mail at PghASR, P.O. Box 9056, Pittsburgh, PA 15224. Note that articles, forms, and other information should be sent to Marsha Tharp, 157 Thornberry Drive, Pittsburgh, PA 15235.

PghASR Change of Address Form

Mail to: Pittsburgh Association of School Retirees, P.O. Box 9056, Pittsburgh, PA 15224

Circle one: Mr. Mrs. Ms. Dr.

Name _____

New Address _____

City _____

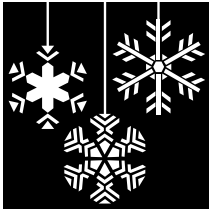
State _____ ZIP _____

Telephone _____

Email _____

Check the category appropriate
for your new address.

___ Personal Care Home ___ Nursing Home
___ Retirement Community ___ Private Residence
Other _____



PGHASR *Holiday Luncheon*

Tuesday, December 8, 2015

Please bring nonperishable food items to be donated to local food banks. Cash and checks are also accepted.

11:30 Awards
12:00 Luncheon

\$35.00

(Includes tax and gratuity)

RIVERS CASINO *Plated Luncheon*

Please bring donations for the purchase of gift cards that agencies can distribute to homeless youth to enable them to purchase items of necessity.

Entrées (*choose one*)

1. Pan Seared Salmon, Yukon Gold Mashed Potatoes, Seasonal Vegetable Medley and Lemon Caper Sauce
2. Seasoned Chicken Breast, Cranberry and Toasted Almond Couscous, Grilled Asparagus and Chianti Demi
3. Vegetarian Plate—Falafel Waffle with Vegetables and Sauce

Luncheon includes choice of chef's selection of soup or house salad, Tiramisu for dessert and freshly brewed house coffee and iced tea.

Every attendee will receive a \$10 voucher for the casino.

PGHASR HOLIDAY LUNCHEON RESERVATION FORM

Reservations are requested no later than Monday, November 30, 2015. Make checks payable to PghASR and mail with this form to Joe Poerio, 979 Crest Lane, Carnegie, PA 15106.

Due to our commitment to the banquet facility, we will not be able to give refunds for cancellations.

Name of person sending reservation _____

Address _____

Phone number _____

Total number of reservations: _____ **Total amount enclosed:** _____ @ \$35 for each reservation

Please circle the luncheon selection and write the name of the person ordering it.

1. **Salmon** **Chicken** **Vegetarian** Name of Attendee _____

2. **Salmon** **Chicken** **Vegetarian** Name of Attendee _____

3. **Salmon** **Chicken** **Vegetarian** Name of Attendee _____

CO-PRESIDENTS' MESSAGE:

James W. White and Joseph Poerio

We are taking this opportunity to extend our sincere gratitude and appreciation to all our members who helped plan, implement and volunteer their services during the 2015 PASR Convention held at the Sheraton Pittsburgh Hotel at Station Square on October 4-7, 2015. This year's convention theme, "Retirement is Re-Creation," enabled all attendees to visit various venues around Pittsburgh and to participate in personal enrichment and association seminars. All the personal enrichment sessions reflected the convention theme and were conducted by representatives from Pittsburgh-owned businesses. Also, participants had the opportunity to visit and learn about different products on display in the lobby of the hotel. These tables were hosted by Pittsburgh-based businesses and gave PASR members an opportunity to purchase or just learn about the products.

Since the convention was hosted by Region 12, Pittsburgh and Allegheny Chapters, we also want to thank the members of the Allegheny Chapter who worked to make this convention such a success. Both chapters were well represented, and as a result, the convention was very successful.

A special thanks to **Ellen Estomin**, Director-Elect of Region 12, and **Van Hughes**, Director of Region 12, for all their time and commitment to making this convention a success. Ellen's organizational skills and determination to make this convention a success was indeed evident in the results. Congratulations on reaching your goal!

One of the highlights of the convention was the election of **Diana Armstrong** as President of the State PASR. Diana held various offices and chairperson positions in the Pittsburgh Chapter, including President-Elect for two years and President for two years. Diana was also Region 12 Director-Elect for two years and Director for two years. In addition, she held various state offices during the past four years and will now be president for the next two years. So, congratulations, Diana, from the Pittsburgh Chapter. We look forward to working with you and having your continued support in the coming years.

Please refer to the various articles in this newsletter describing the seminars that delegates and members of our organization were able to attend. These articles are intended to enable you to have an understanding of the theme of the convention—"Retirement is Re-Creation."

It is hard to believe that we will complete one year of our co-presidency at the end of December. But before the year ends, we have another great event to host, which is the Holiday Luncheon at Rivers Casino on December 8. Please complete the reservation form on page 3 and mail it to Joseph Poerio as soon as possible. Since the Rivers is very strict about numbers for reservations, we will not be able to accommodate late responses. So don't delay! Respond early and join us for good food, good friends and hopefully, good winnings.

As a preview for next year, mark your calendar for all the great events coming up in 2016 (refer to the calendar of events on pages 1-2 in this newsletter). Note the cooking

class we are sponsoring on April 5, 2016, at CRATE in the Greentree Road Shopping Center. The reservation is on page 5. It should be returned as soon as possible. We need at least 16 reservations, and we can take a maximum of 30. Register early and enjoy the fun of learning how to prepare a special lunch and then have the opportunity to eat the lunch you helped prepare.

In closing, we want to wish everyone a very happy and blessed holiday season and a very healthy, happy and prosperous 2016!

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INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR MEDICARE SUPPLEMENT PREMIUM!

Dr. A. Jay Gross, Recording Secretary

If you were a professional employee (teacher, social worker, principal, etc.) of the Pittsburgh Public Schools who retired between 1988 and 2008, you are eligible to receive a reimbursement payment to help cover the cost of your Medicare Supplement premium from the Pittsburgh Board of Education. To receive your payment, you are required to obtain a Benefits Statement from HOP/PSERS or other insurance provider listing your monthly payments toward your Medicare Supplement premiums and proof of enrollment and submit the forms to the Pittsburgh Public Schools Benefits and Insurance Office no later than February 15, 2016. Proof of coverage and premium payments can be obtained by calling HOP or the local PSERS office. Contact information and addresses can be found on page 2 of this newsletter.

In the past it was sometimes difficult to get the forms from HOP/PSERS to the Retirement and Employee Insurance Office in time for the deadline. Now you can get the forms from the PSERS website. Go to <http://www.psers.state.pa.us/> to set up an Interaction Account. You will be able to get information and print ALL forms—including the Benefits Statement and 1099 tax form—earlier than you can receive them by mail from HOP/PSERS.



(Left to right) Donna Vlassich, Ken Kwasniewski, Joseph Poerio, and A. Jay Gross at the PASR State Convention at the Sheraton Pittsburgh Hotel. For more convention pictures, see pages 8-11.

PghASR Benefits & Services CRATE Luncheon



Join PghASR at a private cooking class at
CRATE Kitchenware Store and Cooking School!

CRATE is located in the Greentree Road Shopping Center,
1960 Greentree Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15220.
Phone 412-341-5700

Tuesday, April 5, 2016, 11:30 a.m.

\$35 per person

(This event will have a minimum of 16 and a maximum of 30 people.)

Participants will be seated at tables in the demonstration kitchen. The instructor will demonstrate the preparation of three dishes, and there will be an interactive demo. Guests will receive copies of all the recipes that will be prepared.

After the demonstration, guests will be served the meal. Coffee, tea and water will be available throughout the class. All participants will be offered a 10% discount on many items in the retail store the day of the class.

Menu

Homemade Foccacia brushed with Herb-Infused Olive Oil

Farfalle with Fresh Herbs and Grilled Chicken

Rosemary-Scented Vanilla Ice Cream with Lemon-Thyme Shortbread Cookies with Honey

All reservations must be in by Friday, March 25, 2016. Please send reservations to Joseph Poerio, 979 Crest Lane, Carnegie PA 15106. Be sure to send in your reservation early because it will be on a first-come-first-served basis up to a maximum of 30.

CRATE Reservation Form

Reservations are requested no later than **Friday, March 25, 2016**. Make checks payable to PghASR and mail with this form to Joe Poerio, 979 Crest Lane, Carnegie, PA 15106.

Name of person sending reservation _____

Address _____

Phone number _____

Number of reservations @ \$35 each _____ Total amount enclosed _____

Please Check Your Mailing Label.

Over 100 members have not yet paid their 2015/2016 dues. Please check your mailing label on this newsletter. If **EXPJun2015** or **2ndInstallDue** appears next to your name, please help PghASR avoid mailing costs by sending in your dues NOW. Remember that our fiscal year runs from July 1, 2015, to June 30, 2016. If you have a **Life** membership, no dues are payable. (**Life** appears next your name)

If your dues are payable, please complete and mail the form at the top of page 7 with your payment. If you have questions about your status, write to PghASR, P.O. Box 9056, Pittsburgh, PA 15224, or email the organization at pghpasr@yahoo.com. Your continued support of the Pittsburgh Chapter is needed and appreciated!

RECREO Report—Future Adventures!

Carolyn Kotts-Hankinson, Region 12 MB&S Chairperson

PASR members who participated in the May, 2015, trip to French Canada enjoyed days filled with sightseeing, historic and guided tours, shopping and free time to explore Montreal and Quebec City. Mealtime became an opportunity for strangers to become PASR friends while discussing the day's adventures! Visit www.pasr.org to see trip photos.

The RECREO Committee has selected and is beginning the planning process for the 2016 and 2017 trips. In 2016 the PASR bus trip will be to Cape Cod, Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket. In 2017, PASR members will have the opportunity to participate in two trips! The annual bus trip will be to Mackinac Island, Michigan. The second trip will be an Avalon European River Cruise. Watch future newsletters for details.

Take a Chance on Improving our Future

Van Hughes, PASR Region 12 Director

We are taking a chance that you will agree with the PASR Board of Directors, the Ad Hoc Data Base Committee and the Ad Hoc Fund Raising Committee.

Coordinating PASR state and/or local Chapter activities frequently depends on sending accurate announcements and information to our members, as well as receiving replies from them. On occasion members might receive a request for a timely response, say, to call your legislators, register for an event, etc., but at other times the announcement might just inform you about a benefit or service of which you may want to take advantage. On the other hand, you may want to reach out to Mechanicsburg headquarters or a Chapter committee chair to float an idea, question a policy or update an address. The point of the matter is, it can be done with relative ease with minimal or no cost. Digital electronics has enabled us to communicate with one another in a fashion undreamed of when we were hired decades ago.

The Internet facilitates this communication. All this exchange of information requires is that it remain accurate and secure. Concerned members know all about PASR and its chapters by surfing our own www.pasr.org website. Headquarters maintains your name and address, phone number, email address, birth date, retirement date, and years of service, which basically identifies the close to

30,000 members who make up our association. However, our system is not as efficient as time demands.

A two-year study and follow-up request by the ad hoc Data Base Team culminated at the PASR Board of Directors meeting on July 23, 2015. The team presented its findings from interviews and information gathered from the six vendors. The information and handouts were shared with the Board for its consideration. A motion to consummate a contract with the recommended company to provide the services was approved. We need this upgrade in our communication and record-keeping capabilities.

Recognizing the need for substantial funds to finance the Data Base Project through to completion, another ad hoc committee was assembled to raise funds to finance the project. Incoming PASR President Diana Armstrong and I, plus four other members from across the state, served on that fund-raising committee. The result was to form a Local Option Small Games of Chance raffle, licensed by the State of Pennsylvania. Tickets are \$20.00 each and pay winners every day for 31 days during January 2016. The winning ticket number must match the 6:59 p.m. evening Pick 3 Pennsylvania Lottery drawing winner. The winning amount is \$400 for New Year's Day, Dr. M. L. King Day and every Sunday, and \$300 for every remaining January day.

If you would like to take a chance on winning cash every day during the month of January, give me, Van Hughes, a call at 724-274-4892. You can also contact Diana Armstrong, Carolyn Kotts-Hankinson, Joe Poerio, or James White for tickets. Their numbers are listed on the website at www.pasr.org. Tickets are already going fast! Good luck!

OASIS Intergenerational Tutoring

An Hour a Week Can Change a Child's Life Forever.

Become an OASIS tutor. Help a child in your neighborhood learn to read! No teaching experience is necessary. Free training will be given to mature adults 50 and over. All materials, books and supplies are provided by OASIS. Ongoing education is offered at no charge.

For more information on how to become an OASIS tutor, call John D Spehar, Pittsburgh OASIS Tutoring Director, by phone at 412-393-7648 or by email at jdspehar@oasisnet.org.

OASIS is operated in partnership with the Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council.

PghASR 2015/2016 Dues Renewal Form

Check one category below:

____ Enclosed is my check for \$10 for 2015/2016 dues. (For members with **EXPJun2015** on their mailing label only)

____ Enclosed is my check for \$50 for the 2nd installment for life membership (For members with **2ndInstallDUE** on their mailing labels only or your membership will revert to annual)

Title (circle) Dr. Mrs. Ms. Miss Mr. Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Email address (please print legibly) _____

Make your check payable to PghASR and mail it with this form to PghASR, P.O. Box 9056, Pittsburgh, PA 15224.

Did You Retire in 1995?



20-YEAR RECOGNITION

Dr. A. Jay Gross, Recording Secretary

Are you a PghASR member who retired in 1995? Let us know so we can honor you at the Holiday Luncheon on Tuesday, December 8, for your 20 years in retirement.

Each year PghASR celebrates members who have been retired for 20 years (this year for those who retired in 1995). If you have reached this milestone, we want to hear from you! We plan to recognize you with a certificate at the Holiday Luncheon in December. If you are unable to attend the luncheon, the certificate will be mailed to you at a later date.

Please note that for those of you who qualify, you **MUST** complete and submit the form below to A. Jay Gross, 3 Bayard Road #58, Pittsburgh, PA 15213 by November 26, 2015, to be eligible to receive recognition.

☆☆☆ 20-Year Membership Recognition Form (1995 Retirees) ☆☆☆

To receive the certificate, you **MUST** return this form no later than November 26, 2015, to A. Jay Gross, 3 Bayard Road #58, Pittsburgh, PA 15213.

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Telephone Number _____

Date of Retirement _____

Work Location at Retirement _____

Position Held at Retirement _____

____ I will be attending the Holiday Luncheon and will be sending in my reservation form with payment.
(The reservation form will be in the November PghASR Newsletter.)

____ I will NOT be attending the Holiday Luncheon.

☆☆☆ PASR State Convention Reports ☆☆☆

The PASR State Convention was held at the Sheraton Pittsburgh Hotel at Station Square from October 4-7, hosted by Region 12, Pittsburgh and Allegheny Chapters. The following articles were submitted by PghASR and ACASR members who attended the convention. The photographs were submitted by Ellen Estomin.

Pittsburgh is #1, Again!

Ellen Estomin, PASR Convention Co-Chair

Two years ago, as PASR Convention Co-Chair, I began asking for volunteers to assist with the planning and implementing of our responsibilities as conventions hosts. YOU responded in overwhelming numbers.

Together, we provided a unique convention experience, Pittsburgh style.

We designed the program booklet and bags for the delegates.

We planned a welcome celebration with speakers and entertainment, personal enrichment seminars with speakers and facilitators, Pittsburgh tours with our tour guides, opening ceremonies for the three plenary sessions, the banquet with entertainment, the raffle event and the vendor area.

We provided volunteers for registration and hospitality, and greeters who answered questions and assisted delegates in finding their way.

WHEW!

A huge thank you to the convention committee chairs who assisted in the planning and at the convention.

In addition,

Bob Bell, thank you for assisting wherever you were needed!

Donna Dado and Marsha Tharp, your organization of the raffle room and process and dedication was amazing. We almost reached 100 items. Thank you!

Eileen Gavin, thank you for serving as treasurer and volunteering for numerous hours at the convention at the registration area and as a tour guide.

A. Jay Gross, thank you for serving as the secretary. Your impeccable notes kept me on track with the recorded details!

A. Jay Gross, Debbie Rucki, and James White, thank you for organizing the volunteers in charge of registration, welcoming, and hospitality. You also served as tour guides!

Debbie Rucki, no one could ask for a better Gal Friday!

James White, thank you for the musical selections and talent!

Carolyn Kotts Hankinson, thank you for your assistance in program development, serving as a tour guide, as a facilitator for a personal enrichment seminar and providing us with levity!

Ken Kwasniewski, thanks for serving as a tour guide,

volunteering for everything, and providing us with puns and quips!

Bob Marko, thanks for being Mr. Photographer!

Joe Poerio, you arranged the banquet and decorations, served as a tour guide and assisted in the raffle room. Thank you!

Dorothy Rothbart—always the voice of experience and history. Thank you!

Donna Vlassich, you were my sounding board; you served as a tour guide, was facilitator for a personal enrichment seminar and provided assistance in program development. Thanks for the numerous hours on the phone listening and providing guidance!

Helen Wilson, thanks for your hours as a volunteer and for your computer skills; you spent hours refining our design and formatting it for the program booklet and bag!

Van Hughes, thanks for being co-chair. You served as a tour guide and greeted everyone during the convention!

Thank you to our members who were facilitators for the personal enrichment seminars: J. Kaye Cupples, Mary Jane Conley, Richard Gutkind, Laverne Anthony, Cherri Banks and Regina Holley.

And a big thank you to all of the talented and dedicated members who volunteered to register delegates, greet guests, and provide directions!

You will receive a personal thank you from the committee chairs.

It took a community to put this convention together and assist at the convention. There is no better community than Pittsburgh. We accomplished this together with excellence!



Donna Vlassich (left) and Ellen Estomin (right)

A Shout Out to Convention Volunteers

Debra S. Rucki

On behalf of the Pittsburgh-Allegheny Chapters of PASR, the convention committee sends a shout out to the volunteers. This year's convention was a huge success due to your assistance. Whether you assisted by making a presentation, introducing a speaker, registering guests, acting as a tour group leader, serving as a greeter, aiding delegates in locating meeting rooms, selling raffle tickets or helping in the basket room, without your volunteerism coordinating an event of this magnitude would never have been possible. The Pittsburgh and Allegheny members came through as always by stepping up to the plate. No wonder Pittsburgh is hailed as the "City of Champions!" Thanks again to all of our champions who made this year's PASR Convention a success and, in the words of outgoing Chapter President Ellen Estomin, "Pittsburgh Style!"



Debra Rucki (left) and Donna Vlassich (right)

Flowing with Entertainment

Donna Vlassich

The 2015 PASR Convention kicked off with the smooth sounds of jazz played by the Old School Band featuring Flo Wilson, a Pittsburgh great. Delegates and guests were treated to an evening of easy listening music and songs during the opening social.

Providing the entertainment for the banquet, the students from the Pittsburgh Obama Drama Department treated our guests to a selection of songs from their 2015 spring musical, *SHOUT! SHOUT!* was nominated for ten Gene Kelly Awards and won six. A special thank you to director Kelly McKrell and Principal Dr. Wayne Walters for making this happen!

James White, Co-President of Region 12, led the entire delegate group in song as we opened each plenary session. His voice resonated with "The Greatest Love of All," "This Is My Country" and "God Bless the USA!"

One of the enrichment sessions offered to delegates and members was a walk-through behind the scenes of the entertainment industry as Ed Traversari, concert promoter

and associate professor at Point Park, shared pictures and personal stories of booking artists such as America, KISS, Paul McCartney, Rodney Dangerfield, KANSAS, Robin Williams and Jay Leno.

The talent of all the above showed our pride in Pittsburgh!



Basket Raffle

With almost 100 items ranging from huge wine baskets to wreathes covered in lottery tickets to a handmade quilt to original artworks including pottery bowls, watercolors and oils, the Basket Raffle was a rousing success, raising over \$2,500 for the Social Service and Memorial Honor Fund of PASR. Credit for its smooth organization belongs to chairpersons Donna Dado of Allegheny Country PASR and Marsha Tharp of Pittsburgh PASR and the hard-working volunteers who helped make the event such a positive experience. The generous responses of state chapters provided the incentive for the high ticket sales. So many wonderful choices—and 97 very happy winners!



Vendors added to the festive atmosphere of the convention.



A. Jay Gross (left) and Joe Poerio (right)

PSERS Health Options Program (HOP)

By A. Jay Gross

This session was presented by Mark Schafer, PSERS Health Insurance Office Director. The primary message presented at this meeting was that this year there are a number of major changes to the plans being offered by HOP. It should also be noted that a number of insurance companies who in the past provided health insurance through HOP will no longer be providing insurance through HOP. Those who have these plans will have to select another insurance provider. The insurance plans that are available depend on the county that you live in, not where you worked before retiring.

The other important information was the introduction of the new "Value Medical Plan," with a number of add-on options now being offered to HOP insurees. It was recommended that the coverage and costs of the "low-cost plans" be compared to the plan that insurees currently have and see if the coverage meets their current needs and provides any savings.

Fraud Identity Theft: Are You Next? and Stay Sharp! Activities to Keep Mentally Fit

A. Jay Gross

As a "greeter" at the convention I had the opportunity to sit in on a number of the Personal Enrichment Seminars that were offered at the convention. The seminar, "Fraud Identity Theft: Are You Next?" was presented by William T. Simmons, Esq. a former judge. He explained how it has become more prevalent for seniors to be a target of fraud and identity theft and gave ways for them to protect themselves from this occurring. His presentation was informative and had much valuable advice on how to prevent the misuse of personal and banking information.

The second seminar I attended was "Stay Sharp! Activities to Keep Mentally Fit," presented by Diane Briars and Mary Lynn Raith, both former Pittsburgh Public School math people. They presented to the group a number of paper and pencil games and puzzles to demonstrate the type of math puzzles that are available even if you do not have a computer. They also presented references to a number of online games and activities that could be accessed if a person did have a computer. They explained that the more active mentally you remain, the sharper you will be. Again, this session was very valuable and well received by the group.



Volunteers at the convention registration table

It's Not our Parents' Retirement!

Ken Kwasniewski, Legislative Committee

When our parents retired, many of them laid down their tools of labor to enjoy the fruits of their efforts: relax, travel and, maybe, truly engage in leisure activities. I vividly recall family, friends and neighbors visiting senior citizen centers where they played cards and bingo, shot pool, busied themselves with crafts, learned to line dance and sing, and of course, eat with friends.

The presentation by Lively Pittsburgh's Scott Wolovich and Jason Jablon reminded us that having fun at senior centers is not the only option for active retirees nowadays. The mission of Lively Pittsburgh (livelypittsburgh.com) is to guide active adults to an even more rewarding and fulfilling retirement. We have different expectations from our predecessors. We travel more, we volunteer, we find time to give back and we all continue our personal growth.

Following the theme of this year's convention "RETIREMENT IS RE-CREATION," the Lively Pittsburgh presentation provided insightful and thoughtful suggestions on what retirement is today and can be tomorrow.



William (Jack) Simmons, Esq, presenter of "Fraud Identify Theft"

Thank You!!!!

A. Jay Gross

On behalf of Debra Rucki, James White and myself, I would like to thank all of the wonderful PghASR members who so graciously gave of the time in volunteering to assist in the registration, hosting and basket auction room at the PASR Convention.

It is heartwarming to know that we have such dedicated members who gave us such long hours and superlative service. Again, thank you! Your service was greatly appreciated!



We Need Each Other

By Bob Marko, Region 12 L/PEC Chairman

After participating in the 2015 PASR Convention, I want to let you know that the PASR Board of Directors has taken the position of maintaining and preserving the current PSERS Defined Benefit Pension Plan.

The PASR Legislative Team has developed a viable and responsible Pension Reform Plan entitled **Pension Reform 2**. This PASR Pension Reform 2 provides future school retirees an incentive to leave their contributions in PSERS. This plan proposes that each employee be given a new option to purchase a second "inflation annuity" with funds they are currently entitled to withdraw in a lump sum when leaving employment. This incentive would stem the loss of funds from PSERS and would provide the retirement system's managers the opportunity for greater investment returns. The PASR Legislative Team has also been able to develop a bipartisan public/private partnership that would pay the \$53 billion unfunded pension liability in 14 years and continue to maintain the current Defined Benefit PSERS Pension Program. This partnership would solve the current pension fund debt without a major state tax increase. This is

a great idea to share with all Pennsylvania residents.

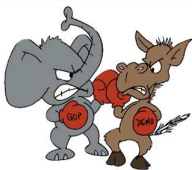
Please review the PASR website (www.PASR.org) to get the latest information about the PASR Pension Reform 2 plan.

All PASR members need each other to help notify our Representatives and Senators about the PASR plan to save our current pension plan. We need every one of our members to contact and advocate to protect our current pension benefits. Please reach out to your school friends and colleagues and encourage them to contact their state legislators regarding this important Pension Reform 2 plan. ALL Pennsylvania legislators must be informed about this plan. Keep in mind that many school retirees are not able to use current computer technology.

WE NEED TO HELP EACH OTHER.

Your contributions to PASR L/PEC enable PASR to continue to protect our pension benefits and to have a strong and effective legislative voice. Please use the form below for your donation.

Remember: If the current retirement system is to continue, it is up to me.



Pennsylvania Association of School Retirees Legislative/Political Education Committee

P A S R
Pennsylvania Association of School Retirees
Founded in 1937

CONTRIBUTION FORM

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____

ZIP _____ Phone: () _____

E-mail Address _____

Did you know that a campaign to urge passage of a single piece of legislation can cost PASR more than \$200,000? **Thank you for your support!**

Contribution Amount

\$10 \$25 \$50 or \$ _____

Please make checks payable to L/PEC and mail to 878 Century Drive ■ Mechanicsburg, PA 17055-8406

Note: L/PEC contributions are not deductible for federal income taxes.

In Memoriam

MARY ACKS
JOAN BEGGS
PATRICK DEVINE
MARY LOU PALS
MARCELENE PATTERSON
MARY PORINCHAK
MARGARET SIMMONS
HILDA SUNDERMANN
AVIS SWEENEY
JOSEPH WOODS

Memorial Honor Fund

In Memory of

Dr. Tom Baker
Cheryl Casebeer
Harry Davis
Dr. Helen Faison
Dr. Helen Faison
Dr. Helen Faison
Dr. Helen Faison
Edwin Harr
Geraldine Harvey
Geraldine Lee
Juanita Means
Dr. Stephen P. Radkowski

Dr. Stephen P. Radkowski
Francis J. Rifugiato
Melvin Vesely
Leo Woods
Lewis Wright

Contributor

Ronald Conant
Ronald Conant
William Fisher
Sidney Feiler
William Fisher
John Soboslay
Marsha Tharp
John Soboslay
Carolyn Olasewere
Carolyn Olasewere
Ronald Conant
Leonetta W. Harvin
and Gerald Mamros
Joan Morton
Helen Wilson
Helen Wilson
William Fisher
Ronald Conant

To contribute to the Memorial Honor Fund, please send your donation to Eileen Gavin, PghASR Treasurer, at 1120 Fairfield St., Pittsburgh, PA 15201. Make your check payable to PghASR. Thank you!

Please Consider Donating

Please consider making a donation to help defray the cost of printing and mailing the PghASR Newsletter. The PghASR officers and the Editorial Board extend gratitude to all who responded since our last publication. To donate, make your check payable to PghASR and mail it to Eileen Gavin, 1120 Fairfield St., Pittsburgh, PA 15201.

Donors

Michaeline Srsic
Carolyn Olasewere

PghASR Scholarship Fund Donors

We would like to acknowledge Cathy DeRiggi's especially generous donation to the Education Fund in honor of her father, Dr. Dominic F. Iannotta.

We would also like to thank Catherine Dargo for her donation to the fund.

The PghASR Scholarship Fund relies on its donors for funding. Contributions of any amount are greatly appreciated. Please consider donating to this worthy endeavor. For further information, contact Donna Vlassich @dvlassich@gmail.com.

Send donations to Eileen Gavin, PghASR Treasurer, at 1120 Fairfield St., Pittsburgh, PA 15201. Make your check payable to PghASR and indicate it is for the Scholarship Fund.

Social Service Memorial Honor Fund

One of the goals of PghASR is to keep in touch with members who are ill, hospitalized, confined to nursing homes and/or confined to their home. Please notify Joseph Poerio of members who fit any of the above categories and also tell us how you have supported them (please use the form below). This is just one way we all can help members in their time of need.

We submit a yearly report to the state organization on how we address this need and how many cards, flowers, gifts, phone calls and/or visits these members received.

Please complete and send this form to Joseph Poerio, 979 Crest Lane, Carnegie, PA 15106, or email the information to him at pjpoerio@comcast.net.

Thank you in advance for supporting our members.

1. Confined member served as follows in total:

Telephone calls _____

Personal visits _____

Cards _____

Flowers _____

Gifts _____

Other _____

2. Members who were ill, hospitalized, etc., as follows in total:

Telephone calls _____

Personal visits _____

Cards _____

Flowers _____

Gifts _____

Other _____

Your name _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Volunteer of the Year Awardee

James W. White, Community Service Chairperson

The Pittsburgh and Allegheny Chapters, Region 12, are proud to announce the 2015 Volunteer of the Year Award Recipient. This year's awardee is Ms. Earlene Henderson. Earlene is a graduate of the Pittsburgh Public Schools, Westinghouse High School, Class of 1966. She received her B.S. degree from Morgan State University and M.A. degree from Penn State University. Earlene retired in 2005 after teaching at South Hills and Brashear High Schools in the Home Economics Department.



Volunteer of the Year
Earlene Henderson

Since retirement, Earlene has spent many hours volunteering without any fanfare. She quietly volunteers to help others who are in need of assistance. Earlene is known to show up at your door with food in hand and willing to help in any way possible. Also, she is a member of the Homewood A.M.E. Zion Church.

Earlene has served as Past President of the Annie L. Anderson Missionaries Society for many years. During her tenure, she volunteered service to Pittsburgh and surrounding communities at nursing homes, soup kitchens, community days, back-to-school projects, Salvation Army's Christmas Toys for Tots, women's shelters, homeless youth organizations and many others. When we think of the old saying, "The apple does not fall far from the tree," Earlene's mother, Mrs. Edith Henderson, received the well-known Jefferson Award sponsored by the Community Champions Program and Pittsburgh Post-Gazette in 2006 for her volunteer service at Langley High School for 20 years.

The 2015 Volunteer of the Year Award will be presented to Earlene at the annual PghASR Holiday Luncheon on Tuesday, December 8, at Rivers Casino, Ohio Banquet Room. Congratulations, Earlene!

Community Service, 2015

James W. White, Community Service Chairperson

As Chapters of PASR, Region 12, PghASR and ACASR will continue to support the goals of PASR. Our challenges are to expand and improve services to others by conducting a project/activity serving youth and by helping to stop hunger in our local areas. We are asking members to continue donating nonperishable items to the food bank. In addition, food bank representatives reminded us to remember that monetary donations give them the opportunity to purchase bulk items that will accommodate and feed more families. Therefore, we are encouraging our members to give monetary donations—cash, money orders, and checks are accepted. All checks should be made payable to PghASR.

In addition, we are accepting gift cards in denominations of \$5, \$10, \$15, and \$20 for various stores such as GetGo, Subway, Target, Walmart and Giant Eagle, to be given to homeless youth organizations in Pittsburgh and surrounding areas. If you would prefer that the Community Service Committee purchase the gift cards, contact James W. White, Chairperson. All donations are accepted at committee meetings, luncheons, and other functions sponsored by Region 12, PghASR and ACASR.

When most of us retired, we thought all we wanted to do was spend time with our families, travel, golf, fish, etc. It was time for us to live for ourselves! After a while, however, some of us began to feel the desire to make a difference, to make productive use of our time, to serve others—the feelings that prompted us to enter public school service in the first place so many years ago.

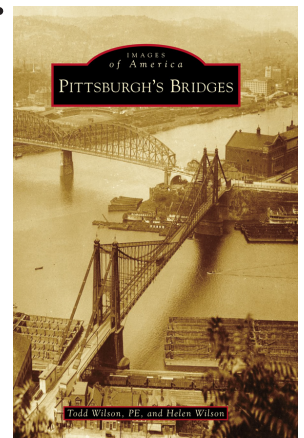
Each year PASR state and local committee members conduct a survey on member volunteerism and report the findings. Why? Because we are tired of hearing that older people are a burden on society. **We are an asset!** The value of volunteer service contributed by school retirees to their communities far exceeds the amount that taxpayers are contributing to fund retiree benefits. We think is an important fact that the general public needs to be made aware of, particularly when asked to help maintain the standard of living we earned as public school employees.

Please take the time to complete and return the PASR Community Service Survey Form on the next page of this newsletter.

PghASR Editor Helen Wilson Co-Authors Book about Pittsburgh's Bridges

PghASR editor Helen Wilson and her son Todd, a civil engineer, have coauthored *Images of America: Pittsburgh's Bridges*, a new entry into Arcadia Publishing's extensive series of photographic books about the history of various communities in the United States.

Images of America: Pittsburgh's Bridges covers the fascinating, convoluted and sometimes explosive history of 144 of Pittsburgh's past and present bridges. The book details the history of bridge-building in Pittsburgh, from the earliest covered wooden bridges to their modern steel and concrete counterparts. The book is available in local bookstores and online at amazon.com.





COMMUNITY SERVICE SURVEY

To All PASR Members – Thank you for being a volunteer in our community!

PASR Chapters are interested in documenting the hours of service that volunteer retirees contribute to their local communities. In doing this, our volunteers show to the community at large, a positive picture of the activities of public school retirees. Please take a moment to complete this form, filling in the appropriate number of hours PER YEAR that you volunteer. A summary of this information will be shared with AARP, NRTA, and PASR Headquarters.

EDUCATIONAL

HRS/YR

Historical Assn.....
 Library.....
 School Board.....
 Other.....
 Total

POLITICAL

HRS/YR

Advocacy.....
 Boards/Commissions.....
 Elections.....
 Other.....
 Total

SOCIAL SERVICES

Boards/Committees.....
 Cancer Society.....
 Drug/Alcohol.....
 Fire/Ambulance.....
 Fraternal Groups.....
 Other.....
 Meals on Wheels.....
 Office of the Aging.....
 Red Cross.....
 Salvation Army.....
 Service organization.....
 Soup Kitchen/Food Bank.....
 Visitation/Nurturing.....
 Other.....
 Total

RELIGIOUS

Adult Instruction.....
 Youth Instruction.....
 Organization.....
 Visitation.....
 Hospital/Nursing Home.....
 Total

SERVICES TO YOUTH

Alliance to Youth.....
 Classroom Volunteer.....
 Head Start.....
 Latch-Key Program.....
 Literacy.....
 Scholarships.....
 School Volunteer.....
 Sports.....
 Tutoring.....
 YMCA/YWCA.....
 Other.....
 Government.....
 Total

I have served in special leadership roles as follows:

.....

..... Total Hrs. / Year / All Categories Chapter

Phone Number Date

Name E-Mail

..... Yes, I want my hours counted, but I **do not** want to be considered for the Volunteer of the Year.

Return this form to: James White 8013 Lingay Dr., Allison Park, PA 15101

Please use the back of this form for clarification or to provide a more detailed description of your involvement with activities not listed.

PITTSBURGH ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL RETIREES

2013 OFFICERS

| | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| Co-President | Joseph R. Poerio | 979 Crest Lane, Carnegie, PA 15106 | 412-489-5443 |
| Co-President | James W. White | 8013 Lingay Dr., Allison Park, PA 15101 | 412-364-9239 |
| Past President | Ellen Estomin | 333 S. Highland Ave. #803, Pittsburgh, PA 15206 | 412-361-2736 |
| President-Elect | Ken Kwasniewski | 554 Azalea Ln, Bridgeville, PA 15017 | 412 833 7236 |
| Treasurer | Eileen Gavin | 1120 Fairfield St., Pittsburgh, PA 15201 | 412-781-7359 |
| Assistant Treasurer, (Membership) | Richard Bassett | 5105 Liberty Ave., Apt. C, Pittsburgh, PA 15224 | 412-681-4363 |
| Secretary, Recording | Dr. A. Jay Gross | 3 Bayard Rd., #58, Pittsburgh, PA 15213 | 412-683-2711 |
| Secretary, Corresponding | Carolyn Olasewere | 3500 Sirius St., Pittsburgh PA 15214 | 412-321-9510 |
| Region 12 Director | Van Hughes | 719 Gulf Lab Road, Cheswick, PA 15024 | 724-274-4892 |
| Region 12 Director-Elect | Ellen Estomin | 333 S. Highland Ave. #803, Pittsburgh, PA 15206 | 412-361-2736 |

2013 COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

| | | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| Community Participation | James W. White | 8013 Lingay Dr., Allison Park, PA 15101 | 412-364-9239 |
| Constitution/Bylaws | Daniel Belisario | 1167 Grouse Dr., Pittsburgh, PA 15243 | 412-279-5947 |
| Educational Support | Donna Vlassich | 1972 Carriage Hill Rd., Allison Park, PA 15101 | 412-527-6130 |
| History/Archives | (Vacant) | | |
| Benefits & Services | Art Carter | 993 Oranmore St., Pittsburgh, PA 15201 | 412-583-8960 |
| and Social Events | Debbie Rucki | 1416 Harris Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15205 | 412-937-0138 |
| Legislative | Michael Finnerty | 777 Robin Dr., Pittsburgh, PA 15220 | 412-429-8687 |
| | Ken Kwasniewski | 554 Azalea Ln, Bridgeville, PA 15017 | 412 833 7236 |
| L/PEC | (Vacant) | | |
| Membership | Adrienne Thomas | 211 N. Dallas Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15208 | 412-661-1436 |
| Newsletter | Richard Bassett | 5105 Liberty Ave., Apt. C, Pittsburgh, PA 15224 | 412-681-4363 |
| | Marsha Tharp | 157 Thornberry Dr., Pittsburgh, PA 15235 | 412-241-7273 |
| | Helen Wilson | 3156 Beechwood Blvd., Pittsburgh, PA 15217 | 412-521-1596 |
| Nominating | Dr. Dorothy Rothbart | 5864 Phillips Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15217 | 412-521-8316 |
| Retirement Planning | Ad Hoc Committee | | |
| Public Relations | Ken Kwasniewski | 554 Azalea Ln, Bridgeville, PA 15017 | 412 833 7236 |
| Recreo Planning (Acting) | Patricia Belisario | 1167 Grouse Dr., Pittsburgh, PA 15243 | 412-279-5947 |
| Resolutions | Van Hughes | 719 Gulf Lab Road, Cheswick, PA 15024 | 724-274-4892 |
| Social Service and | | | |
| Memorial Honor Fund | Ernestine Reed | 8935 Eastwood Rd., Pittsburgh, PA 15235 | 412-874-3243 |

pghpasr@yahoo.com
www.pasr.org

The PASR Pittsburgh Chapter Newsletter

is prepared by the Editorial Board:

Richard Bassett
Marsha Tharp
Helen Wilson

With help from many others

How to Access the PghASR Website

Do you need information or a registration form for an upcoming PghASR event? Do you need to contact a PghASR officer? Do you want to see what volunteering opportunities are available? The PghASR website is the place to find the most current information about the organization. Here's how to access the PghASR website:

1. Go to www.pasr.org. When the PASR homepage opens, click on the LOCAL ASSOCIATIONS tab in the top bar to the right of the large PASR logo.
2. The next page shows a map of Pennsylvania. Click on the WESTERN 12 area of the map.
3. On the next page you'll see information about Region 12. At the right of that page are two categories, LOCAL ASSOCIATIONS and REGION 12 CHAPTER WEBSITES. Click on the Pittsburgh link under REGION 12 CHAPTER WEBSITES to get to the PghASR website.

PITTSBURGH ASSOCIATION OF
SCHOOL RETIREES
P.O. BOX 9056
PITTSBURGH, PA 15224

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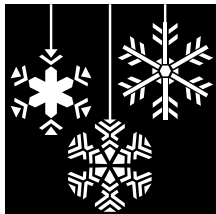


Mark your Calendar for These Upcoming Events!

PghASR

Holiday Luncheon
RIVERS CASINO

Tuesday, December 8, 2015



See page 3 for details.

PghASR Benefits&Services
CRATE Luncheon



Join PghASR at a private cooking class at
CRATE Kitchenware Store and Cooking School!

Tuesday, April 5, 2016

11:30 a.m.

See page 5 for details.