



Allegheny County

June 2016

Retirees Association

NEWSLETTER

P.O. Box 112615 • Pittsburgh, PA 15241-0215 • 412-539-9307 • <http://ACRetirees.org>

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Roger Westman, *President*
Guy Tumolo, *Vice President*
JoAnna McQuaide, *Secretary*
Pete Schepis, *Treasurer*

Janet Norkus, *Assistant to the Treasurer*
Ginny Bowman, *Editor*
Angela Conte

Marge Lubawy
Joseph Scorpion

YOUR ACRA BOARD REPORT By Roger Westman

We are pleased to say that ACRA is doing very well. We've reinstated the March luncheon, which this year featured Todd Wilson, a young professional engineer with a fascination for bridges. His talk and slide show of the old, new and unusual bridges across Pittsburgh's rivers was enthusiastically received. We may have him back sometime in the future to talk about those bridges that don't cross water, but make getting

over ravines and railroad tracks so much easier. Check out his book, *Pittsburgh's Bridges*.

His talk was just the start of many great scheduled events. Timothy Johnson, Executive Director of the Retirement Office, spoke to us in April on our Pension Plan. We followed that with a wildflower walk in Raccoon Creek State Park (look for an article and pictures elsewhere in this newsletter)

and a special tour of the Heinz History Center just for us, at a great price. We have the whole year planned for great events and talks.

Part of our success is due to having a full compliment of Officers and Board Members. For the first time in several years all four Officer positions are filled along with the five Director positions. The most

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TIMOTHY JOHNSON ASSURES ACRA MEMBERS OUR PENSIONS ARE SAFE!

By Ginny Bowman and JoAnna McQuaide

Timothy Johnson, Executive Director, Allegheny County Retirement Office, addressed ACRA members and guests at the April luncheon meeting. He stated the goals were to serve members and ensure the longevity of the pension fund so that all employees and retirees have benefits. He firmly announced that our pensions are safe! Mr. Johnson indicated his source for many of the statistics he cited: the National Institute of Retirement Security.

He said young people today value a pension, not a 401k; they saw their parents struggle during the recession and want to avoid that for themselves. He mentioned the value of pensions as they "filter" through the economy and become jobs and income for others. For every \$1 paid to public sector retirees, \$1.80 of economic benefit is generated in the form of taxes, purchases, jobs and other revenue generators.

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Are you planning a special trip this summer or fall?

Please share your adventure with us!

Write an article for our September or December newsletter. Or tell our editor about your trip and she'll help with the writing:

Ginny Bowman
(412) 561-2696

gbowman3150@gmail.com

Include some photos too.

A REQUEST FROM AN ACRA MEMBER

The ACRA Board received an e-mail message from one of our members, Ted Puzak, who is running to retain his position on the Retirement Board of Allegheny County. The ACRA Board has decided not to endorse any candidate running in this year's election. The following message is published as a courtesy to a member.

A commitment to you, asking for your support -

On May 18th you will receive a ballot from the Allegheny Retirement Board to review and cast your vote. I am the only retiree on the board and it's important that you not lose that representation. I've served as a past ACRA Vice President and have always supported their efforts for a COLA. I've been a member since retirement and will continue to do so. I have successfully worked with several Administrations while on the board. Those of you who are not familiar with my personal experience can go on the Allegheny County Retirement website and there will be my complete biography for you to review.

Sincerely,
Ted Puzak

WELCOMING JOANNA MCQUAIDE

A big welcome to JoAnna McQuaide, our new Secretary. JoAnna comes to us with a wealth of experience and degrees in Human Resources. She spent 22 years with the County becoming part of the strategic leadership team and Deputy Administrator for the Department of Human Resources. She followed that by another 9 years with a private contractor for human resources for a 3-county area and then a couple of years doing similar work for an independent living facility. In her spare time she likes boating and playing bridge, but has been a soccer coach, a volunteer at the Pittsburgh Public Theater, and (lucky for us) is certified in CPR. We are so pleased to have her as a Board Member and Officer.

TIMOTHY JOHNSON

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The Retirement Board has identified five initiatives:

1. Legislation has reduced the amount of unfounded pension liability (achieved).
2. Recognizing the long-term liability of the pension benefit.
3. Recognizing the importance of contributions from both employees and employers; currently employees contribute 9% of their pay and the County matches that.
4. Monitoring investment performance.
5. Maintaining minimal investment fees and expenses, now less than 1% here.

Mr. Johnson said the Retirement Office plans to issue four publications/year: two newsletters, an annual report and an individualized contribution report. The last increase in pensions was in 2015 when those retired for at least one year began receiving an additional \$20/month. The Pension Board will consider a COLA every two years providing established goals and certain benchmarks are achieved.

YOUR ACRA BOARD REPORT

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recent of these is JoAnna McQuaide who is now ACRA's Secretary. Our thanks to V.P. Guy Tumolo whose wide experience with the County has brought him into contact with many talented folks he has recommended for the Board. The Board gets to fill vacant positions for one year at which time newly appointed members must stand for election.

Our thanks also go to all our members who renewed their annual dues so quickly. The renewal process worked very smoothly this year and that makes ACRA even stronger. Membership is steady and strong. There shouldn't be any delay in depositing checks any more with Pete and Janet working as a team of Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer.

It is your Board of nine members working hard together which is bringing you this exciting year of luncheons, a picnic, and outings. Please plan to join your fellow retirees for all the fun and information.



*Shane Miller, Environmental Education Specialist,
with hikers*



Mayflowers



Spring Larkspur (Delphinium tricorne)

ADMIRING WILD FLOWERS AT RACCOON CREEK STATE PARK

By Ginny Bowman ~ Photos by Cassie Brandon

ACRA members and guests are a hardy bunch! Almost everyone who had registered for the guided wild flower walk came, even though it was a chilly, rainy morning. Shane Miller, Environmental Education Specialist at the Wild Flower Reserve in Beaver County, was an expert guide leading the group down the hill, along the Creek, through the meadow and back up the hill to the Interpretive Center. Umbrellas were up during most of the hour-and-a half hike through the drizzle, but that didn't spoil the beauty of the flowers which were abundant. There were common wild flowers such as yellow, white and purple violets, along with more rare blossoms such as the golden ragwort and spring larkspur pictured here. Shane pointed out plants that blossomed earlier and others that would bloom in a couple of weeks, encouraging members to come and explore again. Thanks to ACRA member Lynn Heckman for suggesting this outing. The group enjoyed lunch at Janoski Farms Country Restaurant following the hike and were welcomed despite wet, muddy shoes and boots.



Golden Ragwort (Packera aurea)

In Memoriam

BARBUTO, PAUL04/07/2016
 BENEDICT, MARGARET L.03/14/2016
 BONITZ, CHARLES J.03/11/2016
 CAITHAML, EDWARD F.02/05/2016
 CARLSON, DORIS M.04/13/2016
 CAVANAUGH, KATHLEEN G. ..03/08/2016
 COAKLEY, JOHN F.02/16/2016
 COOK, BLANEY D.04/04/2016
 CRAWFORD, WILLIAM E.02/15/2016
 CRETTI, ALFRED L.02/07/2016
 DINARDO, NORE03/25/2016
 DONNELLY, ROBERTA04/08/2016
 EIRKSON, HOPE A.03/22/2016
 EYROLLES, ALFRED M.02/09/2016
 FALLON, MICHAEL P.04/18/2016
 FREEMAN, JANE A.02/08/2016
 FRESHWATER, WILLIAM M.04/15/2016
 FULHAM, RUTH V.02/03/2016
 FURMAN, SHIRLEY A.02/03/2016
 GOLOFSKI, ANNA D.03/15/2016
 HAIRSTON, JOHN C.04/21/2016
 HAWKINS, SHIRLEY R.02/08/2016
 HAYNES, FRANK J.04/10/2016
 ISKAT, JANE N.04/11/2016

KAPP, WILBERT J.02/28/2016
 KOHLMYER, MARY L.02/04/2016
 KOZA, CHRISTINE S.04/20/2016
 KUCHTA, ELLAROSE A.02/02/2016
 LEWIS, JENNIE03/14/2016
 LLOYD, ROBERT M.03/01/2016
 LYNCH, HELEN M.03/09/2016
 MAGGS, NANCY R.03/16/2016
 MCCALL, DOLORES K.03/19/2016
 MEIGHAN, ROBERT J.02/15/2016
 MILAS, MARTIN P.04/09/2016
 NEAL, MARGARET B.04/23/2016
 QUINTEN, KARL W.03/06/2016
 RANKIN, MARTHA K.03/15/2016
 RECKTENWALD, FRANK H.03/23/2016
 RUCKER, ELIJAH.04/06/2016
 SCALISE, ANTHONY R.03/08/2016
 SCHOEN, GEORGE F.03/23/2016
 SCOTT, LENA M.03/01/2016
 SHELLY, IMOGENE MARI04/14/2016
 SPIRKO, NANCY L.03/11/2016
 THOMAS, ZULA03/06/2016
 WERNER, EDWARD L.04/06/2016
 ZIMMERMAN, FLORENCE O....04/25/2016

TWO IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

**Allegheny County
Retirees Association (ACRA):
412.539.9307**

Call for questions about your
membership, luncheons or
other activities.

**Retirement Board
of Allegheny County (RBAC):
412.350.4674**

Call for questions about your
pension or life insurance.

WATCH YOUR MAIL FOR DETAILS ABOUT:

Family Picnic

West Mifflin Park
Wednesday, June 22, 11:00 a.m.
\$5.00 per person

September 21 Luncheon

Exploring the Pittsburgh Zoo
with Leonard Bach

