



## Retirees Association NEWSLETTER

P.O. Box 5335 • Pittsburgh, PA 15206-0335 • 412-539-9307

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Patricia Cray, *President*  
Joseph Scorpion, *Vice President*  
Ken Bell, *Treasurer*  
Roger Westman, *Secretary*

Ginny Bowman, *Editor*  
Angela Conte  
Guy Tumolo

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT FALL 2015

### Our June picnic.

When we first discussed the event, the Board had hoped that by 1) staging a picnic (which we had never done), 2) at a location other than Greentree (the site of our luncheons), and 3) with a lower price point (than we have to charge for the luncheons) we would, perhaps, reach an audience of members who, for whatever reason, had not been attending other events. From that perspective alone, ACRA's

First Annual Picnic, staged at West Mifflin Park on June 17, was a resounding success! The weather was perfect. The venue was tailor-made for the bocce, ladder ball and corn hole games guests played throughout the day. We enjoyed a delicious lunch catered by Market District, and many attendees used the occasion to just sit and visit with friends and former Allegheny County colleagues.

Furthermore, we attracted a number of members who were attending their first ACRA function. Check, check and check—we met all our goals.

Of course, activities don't stage themselves; they're only as good as the commitment of the people behind the scenes. In the planning stages, we had: Ginny and Ray Bowman, Ken

*President's Report continued on page 2*







Also in October, we will be taking nominations for ACRA Officers from the luncheon floor. Those positions are for President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer and cover a two-year term beginning in 2016.

Wednesday, November 18 is the date of our Annual Meeting, as required by ACRA's By-Laws. The health care counseling sessions will be on-going during the Annual Meeting and luncheon and will take place in a separate room at the Doubletree (to ensure privacy). PLEASE NOTE: These interviews are for members only (and their spouses).

and Mary Lou Bell, Donna Brusco and Marge Lebawy. Then on the day itself, a number of guests pitched in where needed, setting up the tables and the games—and keeping score. Thanks to all. We couldn't have done it without ya'.

Providing opportunities for membership to socialize with former workers is part of ACRA's mission statement, and we're always searching for new ways to make them happen. Got an idea for an activity we haven't done? Let us know; your idea could become our next big event.

## If it's fall, it must be time for a new luncheon series.

Our first luncheon this fall will fall on Wednesday, September 16. Our guest speaker will be Paul Halliwell of Cowden Associates, the actuarial firm that advises the Retirement Board every year on whether to raise the contribution rate [of active employees] to the County's pension fund, and, if so, by how

much. Maintaining the right balance—contributions vs. payouts—keeps the pension fund healthy. Mr. Halliwell is one of the original architects of the formula that is used in this annual calculation. Here's your chance to ask him how our fund is doing and what recommendation Cowden is likely to make to the Retirement Board in December.

On Wednesday, October 21, we'll welcome Barbara Veazy, an R.N. and health care advisor, who will provide an overview of the health plans available to Western PA consumers in 2016. Ms. Veazy teaches a six-part series on all aspects of health care every year for the Mt. Lebanon School District. She is, therefore, well-experienced in this field, and we look forward to her sharing her insights with us. (In November, Ms. Veazy will also be holding one-on-one counseling sessions with members interested in making a change in their health care insurance for 2016. Those sessions are "by appointment only." More information TBA.)

And, finally, we will finish the year's programs on Wednesday, December 9 with our Christmas Party. More information will be forthcoming as it becomes available, but be sure to mark the date on your calendars.

## The end of my term.

I have decided not to run for re-election this year. I have served ACRA for ten years now—two as Secretary and eight as President; it's time to let someone else helm the ship. One of the most gratifying aspects of my presidency has been the opportunity to meet and get to know so many of you. If you're in attendance at one of our upcoming events, I hope you'll come up and say hello—and good-bye. It's been my pleasure.

With best wishes,



# CAREGIVER'S CORNER: IMPORTANT GUIDELINES FOR PROVIDING CARE FOR A LOVED ONE

**Whatever the specifics of your situation, there are some important basic guidelines to remember when you provide care for a loved one: preserve dignity; involve your loved one; promote independence; ask for help; be an advocate; and take care of yourself.**

## **1. Preserve Dignity.**

Respect your loved one's right to make decisions about his or her life and help him or her maintain a sense of control and privacy whenever possible.

## **2. Involve Your Loved One.**

The ability to make decisions is a basic freedom, so provide choices whenever possible - from where to live to which cereals to eat at breakfast to what to wear. Choices enable us to express ourselves. As your loved one's options become more limited (through health losses, financial constraints, etc.) , you may have to work harder to provide choices.

## **3. Promote Independence.**

If your loved one is still capable of performing certain activities, such as paying bills or cooking meals, encourage him or her to do so. Helping your loved one maintain a feeling of independence will make him or her feel better about being in a care-receiving situation.

## **4. Ask for Help.**

Many caregivers are so accustomed to providing help and seeing to another person's needs that they don't know how to ask for aid themselves. Take advantage of the help that's available. Your family is your first resource. Spouses, brothers and sisters, children, and other relatives can do a lot to ease your caregiving burden. Let them know what they can and should do. Look to your church for

aid and counsel. Make your minister or religious leader aware of your situation. Turn to caregiving support groups, or support groups for specific illnesses like Alzheimer's or heart disease.

## **5. Be an Advocate.**

Keep in mind you are a member of your loved one's health care team, and that your role is as important - if not more important - than anyone else's. In many cases, you may be the only one equipped to speak out on your loved one's behalf or to ask difficult questions. Chances are that none of the health professionals providing care for your loved one will know every aspect of his or her condition at the start. You may need to help with the exchange of information among physicians.

## **6. Take Care of Yourself.**

Providing care while holding down a job, running a household, or parenting can lead to exhaustion. If you do become exhausted or sick you're more likely to make bad decisions or take out your frustrations in an unfair way. Take advantage of opportunities for respite care. Refresh yourself for the "long haul". Pay attention to what your body tells you. Be prepared for many potential lifestyle changes (work schedules, social life, money and resources) and evaluate your readiness.

Reprinted with permission from Longwood at Home, a program of Presbyterian SeniorCare.



# In Memoriam

AMATO, ANTHONY S. ....05/23/2015  
 ARK-HING, BILLY Y. ....07/27/2015  
 BLASHICH, SHIRLEY.....05/14/2015  
 BOWLAND, FLORENCE M.....05/20/2015  
 BURTON, JUDITH M. ....06/03/2015  
 BUTERA, DOROTHY M. ....07/08/2015  
 CONNER, ARNETTA J. ....06/25/2015  
 CORNELL, KATHLEEN B. ....05/18/2015  
 DONAHUE, JOSEPH M. ....07/12/2015  
 FUNARO, MARY R.....07/21/2015  
 GEDDIS, M. VICTORIA.....07/16/2015  
 GREEN, KENNETH L. ....07/11/2015  
 HALLIGAN, DONALD C. ....05/03/2015  
 JOHNSON, JOHN T.....06/19/2015

LACAVA, SALVATORE .....06/17/2015  
 MAY, JOSEPH Z.....05/25/2015  
 MOROFF, MICHAEL J.....05/25/2015  
 PARKER, HAROLD.....05/19/2015  
 SAPERE, SALVATORE.....05/14/2015  
 SIEBER, LOUETTA M.....05/29/2015  
 SIMONE, CHARLES B. ....06/08/2015  
 SLOKA, NAOMI W.....05/05/2015  
 SMITH, JAMES L.....07/06/2015  
 SMITH, JERRY E.....06/08/2015  
 STIEFF, DORCAS E.....07/18/2015  
 SUBISAK, LEONARD J.....06/02/2015  
 WARD, FLORENCE MAY.....05/02/2015  
 WARD, JOHN T.....06/20/2015

## Share your fun!

Have you taken a special trip? Tell us about it! We know your grandchildren excel and do spectacular things. Brag a little! We want to hear about their awards and accomplishments. Send your news to Ginny Bowman, Editor, at gbowman3150@gmail.com or 315 Hazel Drive, Pittsburgh, PA 15228.

## The cure for everything is saltwater - sweat, tears, or the sea.

- Seen on a plaque at the end of the Marsh Walk, Murrell's Inlet, South Carolina

**Yesterday is but a dream, tomorrow but a vision. But today, well lived, makes every yesterday a dream of happiness and every tomorrow a vision of hope.**  
 - Indian Proverb

## SAVE THE DATES

### Our Luncheon Series:

**September 16, 2015**

Paul Halliwell

How is our pension fund doing?

**October 21, 2015**

Barbara Veazy

What's new in Medicare?

**November 18, 2015**

Annual Meeting  
 Healthcare Counseling

**December 9, 2015**

Christmas Party

## 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.