



Allegheny County

SEPTEMBER 2019

Retirees Association

NEWSLETTER

P.O.Box 15285 • Pittsburgh, PA 15237 • 412-459-7674

Website: <http://acretirees.org> • Email: acretireeassociation@gmail.com

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Guy Tumolo, *President*
Pete Schepis, *Vice-President*
JoAnna McQuaide, *Secretary*

Janet Norkus, *Treasurer*
Connie Przybyla, *Editor*
Angela Conte

Pamela Long
Marge Lubawy
Joan McMahon

Message from THE PRESIDENT

Enjoy your retirement even more. VOLUNTEER!!!! This newsletter is written and produced by volunteers; volunteers arrange the monthly luncheons and interesting speakers; volunteers arrange for the special events, like the annual picnic, holiday party and special activities like this year's tours of Heinz Field, Phipps Conservatory and the History Museum. Why don't you join them and enjoy your retirement even more?

The nine elected members of the Board of Directors are all volunteers. Election of officers is scheduled this year and next year the remaining five positions will be up for vote. It is a great Board with everyone actively participating. This year we lost our treasurer, Janet Norkus, to the sunnier state of Florida. Cathy Thomas generously volunteered to finish out her term and run for office this year. The change you may have noticed in our mail address was instituted to make it more convenient for our new treasurer to pick up the mail. Our Secretary, JoAnna McQuaide, has informed us that she will not run for reelection this year due to the need to devote more time to some personal issues. We all owe a tremendous debt to our departing officers for the services and improvements they have contributed to the Association.

You don't have to be on the Board to enjoy the benefits of volunteerism. There are committees that can use your participation. Currently the committees consist of: Newsletter, ably headed by Connie Przybyla aided by Joan McMahon; Membership, under Ginny Bowman; Audit, Pete Schepis; Election by Bob Meussner; and Program by the Board as a whole, with Pam Long and Marge Lubawy as major contributors. Though we don't have a formal committee, Angela Conte is the main force behind the luncheon menu, picnic and holiday party.

SAVE THE DATES

SEPTEMBER 12, 2019

Heinz History Center -
Tour of Vietnam War 1945-1975 Exhibit

SEPTEMBER 18, 2019

LUNCHEON PROGRAM

MEMBER APPRECIATION MONTH -
SPECIAL LUNCHEON PRICE OF \$10 PER PERSON
Ventures Outdoors & Pittsburgh Keystone Chorus

OCTOBER 16, 2019

LUNCHEON PROGRAM

Bigfoot Research Project

NOVEMBER 20, 2019

LUNCHEON PROGRAM

Updates from Retirement Board & Apprise

DECEMBER 11, 2019

LUNCHEON PROGRAM

ACRA Annual Holiday Party

***For more details visit our website at
<http://acretirees.org/>**

We need you to spend a small part of your time on the Association. Contact Bob Meussner if you would like to run for any of the four offices open this year. Contact any member of the Board or the Association if you would like to volunteer yourself or contribute an idea to improve the Association. Use e-mail or mailbox. We respond to both.

**VOLUNTEER! IT WILL MAKE YOUR
RETIREMENT YEARS MORE MEANINGFUL.**

RETIREMENT BOARD ANNUAL REPORT

by Guy Tumolo

The Retirement Board's Annual Report for 2018 has been issued. The following represents information from the Report that may be of interest to ACRA members. It is not intended to cover all the information in the document.

First, a look at comparisons between year-end 2018 and the previous year-end 2017. In the area of contributions to the plan, employees contributed \$3.2 million more to the plan and the County contributed \$3.0 million in 2018 than in 2017, for a total last year of \$38.3 million. The contribution rate for active employees is now 10%.

Investment returns for 2018 were a negative 3.4% with public equities being the largest negative performer. The net position of the fund was down \$65.1 million for a total asset value of \$875.5 million. Benefit payments in 2018 were \$102 million. There were 4830 recipients

of benefits which averaged \$1693 monthly, an increase of \$67 from the 2017 average. The beneficiaries have an average age of 73.6.

On the other side of the equation there were 7200 paying into the plan, down 47 from 2017. Their average age is 47 with an average of 12.5 years of service prior to December 31, 2018.

The total funded ratio of the plan was 77.3%. up 3.9% from 2017.

Despite the downturn in the market at the end of last year, the fund seems to be doing comparatively well according to the consultants' report in the document.

This is only a sample of the information in the report. More recent information on the status of the plan indicates that the investments have recovered quite nicely and may be found in the article "Pension Fund Notes."

PENSION FUND NOTES

by Guy Tumolo

The regular meeting of the Retirement Board of Allegheny County (RAC) was held on July 18. The following table is based on a report from the County Controller distributed at that meeting. It presents the contributions of the three revenue sources to the fund, the retirement payouts from the fund and the cost of administering the fund for the first four months of this year.

Report period: January 1 through April 30, 2019. All figures are unaudited and rounded to millions of dollars.

NET POSITION BEGINNING OF YEAR	\$ 875.5
EMPLOYEE CONTRIBUTIONS	\$ 11.6
COUNTY CONTRIBUTION	\$ 11.6
INVESTMENT AND MISCELLANEOUS INCOME	\$ 73.0
BENEFIT PAYMENTS AND REFUNDS	\$ (37.7)
SALARIES AND ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS	\$ (.4)
NET POSITION FEBRUARY 28, 2018	\$ 933.6

At the meeting the consultants reported that May had been a rough month for investments. June returns to the fund should be in the 4% range. They estimated that the total return at year end would be approximately 6%. The next meeting of the Retirement Board will be on September 19, 2019 in the Gold Room of the Court House

RECIPES BY PAM

by Pam Long



PARMESAN & THYME CRACKERS

- 1/4 pound (1 stick) unsalted butter at room temperature
- 4 ounces freshly grated Parmesan cheese (about 1 cup)
- 1 teaspoon minced fresh thyme leaves
- 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- 1 1/4 cups all-purpose flour

In the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, cream the butter for 1 minute. With the mixer on low speed, add the Parmesan, thyme, salt and pepper on low, add the flour and combine until the mixture is in large crumbles, about 1 minute. If the dough is too dry, add 1 -2 teaspoons of water.

Form the dough into a ball and roll into a couple of logs. Wrap in plastic wrap and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes or up to 4 days.

Meanwhile, preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Cut the logs into 1/2 inch thick rounds with a small sharp knife and place them on a sheet pan lined with parchment paper. Bake for 22 minutes until very lightly browned. Rotate the pan at 11 minutes or once during baking. Cool and serve at room temperature.

Enjoy!!



In Memoriam*

MARCH

HALL, MARY E	3/5/2019
MIKUT, ROBERT C	3/9/2019
MCKEE, WILLIAM R	3/23/2019
WEISGERBER, HELEN M	3/26/2019
WILSON, LUVENIA MAE	3/26/2019
HUTCHINSON, GRACE I	3/31/2019

APRIL

SHRUM, HEDWIG	4/4/2019
LOUIS, ELIZABETH G	4/10/2019
MARINACCI, HELEN L	4/23/2019
MACLEAN, BEVERLY A	4/24/2019
BERQUIST, RALPH F	4/28/2019
URQUHART, CHUN HWA	4/30/2019

MAY

BUZZATTO, MARY	5/2/2019
ZILICH, NANCY M	5/4/2019
CALLAHAN, LOIS J	5/9/2019
SMYKSY, DANIEL W	5/10/2019
WESTMAN, JAMES	5/12/2019
STACER, JOHN R	5/13/2019
ABRAHMS, DOLORES J	5/14/2019
WEISS, ALVIN	5/20/2019

JUNE

BARKAC, JOYCE	6/8/2019
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**As provided by the
Allegheny County Retirement Board*

In the Spotlight: ROBERT MEUSSNER

by Connie Przybyla

Bob retired from the Allegheny County Jail in 2004 after 32 years as a Correctional Officer.

Prior to his employment with Allegheny County, Bob served our country during the Vietnam War. He was a military police officer/Specialist 4 in the 18th Military Police Brigade stationed in Long Binh & DaNang.

His service left him with a deep commitment to our country and the men who served in the armed forces. He is currently the Commander of the American Legion Brentwood/Carrick Post #725. He is also on the Honor Guard and regularly attends funerals of veterans. Additionally, Bob is the Sergeant of Arms for the American Legion Allegheny County 32nd - 36th districts. Each Memorial Day Bob helps organize the placement of American flags on the graves of veterans buried in the Southside and Concord cemeteries. As a member of the American Legion, Bob has marched in the Fourth of July Brentwood parade at least 15 times representing veterans.

Bob is a lifetime member and honor guard member of the Vietnam Veterans Inc. of Pittsburgh and a lifetime member of the Vietnam Veterans of American, Beaver County. Both organizations are

dedicated to promoting camaraderie and support for our veterans.

Bob and his wife have traveled to Las Vegas, Hawaii, New York and Virginia Beach since his retirement. He also loves to work in his garden of flowers and vegetables.

Bob has been married to his wife, Charlotte, for 45 years. They have 2 children, Candice and Bob, Jr. The loves of his life are his grandchildren, David 5 and Danica 3.

We thank Bob for his service, commitment and passion to our armed forces.



PENSION SUMMIT

by Pete Schepis

On Friday, June 13th Guy Tumolo and I attended a seminar arranged by the Retirement Board of Allegheny County. The moderator was Bill Flanagan and presenters included County Treasurer John Weinstein, State Treasurer Joe Torsella, and financial advisers and investors. The audience was comprised of public pension entities which included various union pension fund representatives.

The goal of the day was to help explain the complexity of investing and protecting the assets of pension funds. Discussion focused on economic conditions, investment risks and investment policy. Managing risk is essential to the health of pension funds. Pension funds secure financial advisers and actuaries to help choose investment firms and determine the long-term viability of the fund. The presenters explained the methods

and challenges in securing safe and profitable investments. The pension boards in conjunction with their financial advisers must be constantly vigilant in monitoring the status of investments.

The managing of a pension fund is complex and measurably effected by economic conditions. Constant review, evaluation and assessment are imperative to the maintenance of the successful fund.

TRANSITION OF THE COUNTY MORGUE

by *Connie Przybyla*



The Office of the Coroner for Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, is one of the foremost medico-legal programs in the country. It investigates cases of persons who die within Allegheny County from criminal violence by casualty or by suicide, when unattended by a physician; under correctional custody or in any other suspicious or unusual manner. The office's jurisdiction includes the city of Pittsburgh and its immediate suburbs.

Historically, the title of coroner could be held by any land-owning citizen, with professions ranging from a cabinet maker, to a silversmith, farmer, or lawyer, but seldom was it held by a physician. Before there was a county morgue system, local undertakers would race to recover reported dead bodies and the accompanying \$12 in fees from the county.

The first Allegheny County Coroner (pre-1881) was William McCallin. As a young man he was in the livery business, where he attained success and wealth. Mr. McCallin also held other offices in his lifetime. He was successfully elected as Allegheny County Sheriff in 1881 and then was elected as the Pittsburgh mayor in 1887.

Herber McDowell was coroner from 1887 to 1899. During his stint, he helped draft through legislation to help counties statewide fund and standardize morgue duties. Philadelphia, at the time, had the

only morgue in Pennsylvania. In 1893, McDowell's efforts were successful, and the Allegheny County morgue began to exist in a makeshift facility on Eighth Avenue.

The new morgue took two years to build and was completed on April Fool's Day in 1903. Its gothic architecture mimic that of the Allegheny County Courthouse and the former Allegheny County Jail. In 1929, County planner's intent was to form a fortress-like district of government buildings, including the morgue, centered in downtown Pittsburgh. The decision was made that it much cheaper to move the building than to build a new morgue. The three-story marble and stone morgue was moved using a system of beams designed by Kress-Orvits Co. The building was slowly and arduously moved in one piece onto beams and then pulled by cable along the system until it rested on the new foundation built at the 542 Fourth Avenue property. The horsepower that moved the building consisted of 60 men and two teams of horses! During the three weeks it took to move the building, operations continued. Temporary gas, water, and sewage lines were connected and maintained on a 24-hour basis. The move was completed on August 11, 1929.

By the turn of the century, the Coroner's Office in Allegheny County was well on its way to becoming a fully developed medico-legal investigative agency. Employees took an active role in performing autopsies, rather than hiring private physicians to do the work. In 1965, Allegheny county voters elected their first physician as Coroner, Dr. William Hunt.

Back then the morgue was open 24 hours a day. At that time, fewer people carried identification and there was lack of technology to identify deceased persons. So many unidentified, embalmed bodies laid in the chapel until someone claimed them. After time had passed the morgue cremated the unclaimed bodies. In an odd custom, many prom couples would stop by the morgue on their way to the prom to view the bodies. Dr. Hunt ended this public display of bodies when he was

elected. He stated, "Ninety percent of the people who go in there do it out of pure idle curiosity and I think it's ghoulish as hell."

Since Dr. Hunt, the Office has made its professional expertise available upon request to coroners' offices and law enforcement agencies in surrounding counties.

In 2005 Allegheny County voters approved a referendum that eliminated the Coroner as a Row Officer, returning it to its early roots as an appointed position, now called Medical Examiner. All future office holders being appointees of the Allegheny County Executive once approved by County Council.

In 2015 the Medical Examiner's Office moved to its current location at 1520 Penn Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15222. The Medical Examiner's Office also houses the Forensic Laboratory Division for the County. The disciplines within the laboratory are Drug Chemistry, Environmental Health, Firearms/Toolmarks, Forensic Biology, Latent Prints, Mobile Crime Unit, Toxicology, and Trace Evidence.

The current Chief Medical Examiner, Dr. Karl Williams, was appointed in January 2007. As Medical Examiner, Dr. Williams is responsible for supervising a staff of four Forensic Pathologists who perform autopsies on approximately 1,200 cases a year. Additionally, he is responsible for administering the full-service Crime Laboratories of Allegheny County which includes sections of Toxicology, Firearms/Toolmarks, Serology/DNA, Fingerprint, Environmental Monitoring, Drug Chemistry and Trace Evidence, and the mobile Crime Scene Investigation unit.



NEW RETIREES LIST



MAY

Admayer, Jerome	Kilian-Masci, Eileen
Austin, Deborah	King, Darla
Bonvich, Rosanne	Lokar, Nancy
Cunningham, Bruce	McCarthy, Sandra
Farrell, Terry	Mistick, Joseph
Freshwater, Cheryl	O'Toole, Marion
Garrubba, Joseph	Rebholz, Robert
Goebel, Joyce	Slimak, Thomas
Hursen, Joseph	Snyder, Thomas
Johnson, John	Weigold, Susan
Johnson, Rosorita	Work, Maureen

JUNE

Anfang, David	Maglicco, Frank
Belotti, Richard	Maxwell, Robert
Blettner, James	McCourt, Brian
Burkholder, Lester	Meyer, Donald
Campbell, Leo	Morris, Landis
Coley, Catherine	Morris, Purri
Cywinski, Yvonne	Moskal, Diana
Faloon, Daniel	Piscitelli, Michael
Firment, Joseph	Pugh, Dale
Griffin, Thomas	Rowe, Sharon
Gualtieri, Susan Lynn	Sheridan, Patricia
Hall, Theresa	Smith, Juanita
Helt, Daniel	Thomas, Gail
Hores, Glenn	Wagner, Richard
Iverson, Lanita	Wilson, Lewis
Johnson, Timothy	Wilson, Richard
Kahler, Thomas	Woltz, John Jr.
Leasure, Victoria	

JULY

Allen, Toni Kay	Longacre, James
Balla, David	Mahoney, Charles
Betts, Alvin	Mantick, Mary Ann
Black, Lynda	O'Toole, Joette
Calhoun, Keith	Panza, Patricia
Camacho, James	Payne, Bonnie
Clark, Donald	Radoycis, Nicholas
Cohen, Janice	Reardon, James
Diggs, Terry	Richter, Kenneth
Donato, Joseph	Schofield, Timothy
Farbaugh, Jeffrey	Smith, Vernon
Farine, Gary	Spence, Dennis
Ford, Sandra	Thomas, William
Giconi, Paul	Wagner, Barbara
Hores, Helen	Ware, Carol
Jamieson, Helen	Yeskey, Daniel
Latone, Paul	

ACRA PICNIC

Even though the weather didn't cooperate for the annual ACRA picnic, everyone still had a great time. There was plenty of good food and fellowship to go around. Everyone had great fun playing a 1960's TV trivia game. The first place winner of the trivia game was Janet Guardino. How do you think you would have done playing the trivia game? Can you guess the answer to just this one trivia question? *Who was Joe Friday's partner on Dragnet?*



Answer: Bill Gannon

FREE RIDES FOR SENIORS/ IN SERVICE OF SENIORS NORTH



Operated by North Hills Community Outreach in partnership with the St. Margaret Foundation, the Free Rides for Seniors, volunteer-driven 10-passenger shuttles, run weekdays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the following communities: Blawnox to Sharpsburg along Freeport Road; Millvale/Etna; Tarentum/Brackenridge/Cheswick/Natrona Heights; and Oakmont. In addition, In Service of Seniors, a program of North Hills Community Outreach, offers rides throughout northern Allegheny County, matching volunteers with seniors to provide transportation to medical appointments and grocery shopping.

Must be age 60 or older.

To sign up, call (412) 449-0151



PROTECTING OUR VISION AS WE AGE

by Joan McMahon

Many retirees are careful about scheduling and keeping regular check-up appointments with their doctors and dentists in order to protect their physical and dental health. But what about protecting vision health? Often that is put on the back burner, despite the fact that some eye diseases/conditions have no symptoms at first. It is vital to identify them in the early stages when treatment to prevent vision loss is most effective.

Vision and eye problems are increasing as America ages. The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that approximately 12 million people, 40 years and above, in the United States, have vision impairment, including 1 million who are blind. The leading causes of blindness and low vision in the U.S., are primarily age-related eye diseases such as:

Age-Related Macular Degeneration (AMD) which results in damaging sharp and central vision. There are two forms of AMD—wet and dry.

Cataract is a clouding of the eye's lens. It is the leading cause of blindness worldwide, and the leading cause of vision loss in the U.S.

Diabetic Retinopathy, a common complication of diabetes, is the leading cause of blindness in American adults. Early detection and treatment can prevent or delay blindness due to diabetic retinopathy in 90% of people with diabetes.

Glaucoma refers to a group of diseases which damage the optic nerve and result in vision loss and blindness.

HOW OFTEN SHOULD OLDER ADULTS HAVE A COMPREHENSIVE EYE EXAM?

According to CDC, generally speaking, all healthy adults over 60 years of age should have a dilated eye exam every two years. Persons with diabetes should have a dilated eye exam every year. Those with other chronic health conditions should consult their physicians for recommended frequency of eye exams.

If you experience any of the following: decreased vision, draining or redness of the eye, eye pain, double vision, floaters (tiny specks that appear to float before your eyes), circles (halos) around lights, flashes of light, don't wait for your next appointment. Contact your eye doctor as soon as possible.

5 WAYS TO PROTECT YOUR VISION

1. Get regular comprehensive eye exams.
2. Eat a healthy diet, including leafy greens, and maintain a healthy weight.
3. Know your family's eye health history.
4. Wear sunglasses that block out 99% to 100% of the sun's radiation rays,
5. Quit smoking.

VISION IS PRECIOUS-----BE PROACTIVE IN KEEPING AN EYE ON YOUR VISION HEALTH!

ACRA REGISTRATION FORM

\$15 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEE

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____

I am the Retiree ☐ YES ☐ NO

I am the Spouse of a Retiree ☐ YES ☐ NO

Address _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Telephone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Email Address: _____

Dept. You Retired From: _____ Year of Retirement: _____

- ☐ I want to receive ACRA postcards announcing the luncheons and special events in addition to the newsletter.
- ☐ I will depend upon the quarterly newsletter for ACRA program updates.
- ☐ I would prefer ONLY electronic versions of the newsletter and notices.

SEND THIS FORM AND CHECK PAYABLE TO ACRA TO THE FOLLOWING ADDRESS:
ACRA, PO BOX 15285, PITTSBURGH, PA 15237