



Retirees Association

NEWSLETTER

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Guy Tumolo, *President*

Marge Lubawy, *Vice-President*

JoAnna McQuaide, *Secretary*

Cathy Thomas, *Treasurer*

Connie Przybyla, *Editor*

Donzella Johnson-Smith

Hugh Hachmeister

Pam Long

Joan McMahon

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

2023 LUNCHEON DATES

JANUARY, FEBRUARY & MARCH 2023

No Luncheons

APRIL 19, 2023

Speaker To Be Announced

MAY 17, 2023

Speaker To Be Announced

JUNE 21, 2023

Acra Annual Picnic

JULY & AUGUST 2023

No Luncheons

SEPTEMBER 20, 2023

Speaker To Be Announced

OCTOBER 18, 2023

Speaker To Be Announced

NOVEMBER 15, 2023

Medicare & Retirement Updates

DECEMBER 13, 2023

ACRA Annual Holiday Party

* Visit our website at <http://acretirees.org/> for more information

Message from

THE PRESIDENT

I would like to take a few minutes to review some of the events of the past year with you.

First, the one that affected almost all retirees was the raise in the monthly pension benefit which your association was instrumental in getting. Anytime is a good time to get a raise; but this time was a particularly welcome one. Additionally, the Pension Board adopted a policy that established the criteria for an annual consideration of a pension increase. This is significant in that the pension plan itself does not provide for a regular cost of living adjustment.

Another service to members has been the traditional luncheons with a cadre of great and interesting speakers. In the last few years, we have supplemented the luncheons with additional social activities involving trips to places of interest suggested by members. This year we grouped them all in the summer months when there are no luncheons scheduled. After the picnic we traveled to the Botanic Gardens, toured the three rivers, and mellowed out at a winery.

Pictures of members enjoying these activities were published in the newsletter and many more can be seen on your website. Give it a "look see." You may find pictures of yourself or some of your acquaintances. That brings us to the newsletter and the website. This is the fourth publication of the newsletter this year.

It is an amazingly good periodical put together by our editor, Connie Przybyla, assisted by Joan McMahon with other Board members writing articles and providing recipes. Connie also manages the website. These two communication venues have kept you informed of what's going on in your association.

Speaking of board members, two new people have joined the Board. Donna Johnson-Smith and Hugh Hachmeister. Hugh jumped right in and organized a pig roast for the June picnic. Donna worked on the menus for the luncheons and is working on programs for next year.

Coming up is our annual Christmas party. Lenny Garlicki has agreed to conduct the highly enjoyable sing along. It will be interspersed with the customary Christmas gift raffles.

Remember that all these luncheons, speakers, social activities, notifications, and communication vehicles are presented to you by volunteers. Won't you help out in the coming year? The board meets at the Doubletree prior to each luncheon starting at 10 AM. You are invited to join us.

Due to increases in the cost of mailing, printing, and luncheons on October 19 your board voted to increase annual dues to \$20, and the cost of luncheons to \$20 for members and \$25 for non-member guests. For 2023 the March

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NEW RETIREES LIST

AUGUST

Atkins, Darrin
Boyle, William
Clements, Barbara
Durso, John
Fine, Linda
Getty, Joel
Goodman, Richard
Hernon, Robert
Kreuzer, William
Luther, Jeffrey
McMahon, Rose
Mueller, Thomas
Nemeth, Keith
Nolan, Brian
Pratt, Philip
Somerville, Thomas
Thompson, Darlinda
Troyan, Thomas
Zottola, Marie

SEPTEMBER

Bush, Veronica
Douglass, Dolores
Dugan, Timothy
Farley, Patricia
Guess, Leah
Klein, William
Moretti, Marino
Naughton, Paul
Orsini, Michele
Oshenic, Paul
Petrosky, Susanne
Petty, George

Richel, Darlene
Saracco, Stephanie
Tenney, William
Vituccio, Gary
Voitko-Brown, Donna
Wielgoleski, George

OCTOBER

Black, Shiryln
Castellano, Diane
Chimielewski, Larry
Connors, Richard
Crisson, Paul
Dady, Kimberly
Dolensky, Kathleen
Glasser, Robert
Herstine, Bruce
Hilinski, Russell
Hosack, Michael
Lane, Theresa
McNamara, Daniel
Morrow, Mary Eileen
Natale, Cheryl
Ogbeha, Felix
Parker, Darrel
Parrish, Amy
Pratt, Thomas
Sluganski, Theodore
Smith, Steve
Smith, Amy
Spudich, Denise
Thomas, Maxine
Williams, Margaret
Zwergel, Cynthia

In the Spotlight DENISE DUFFY

by Connie Przybyla



Denise Duffy retired on March 15, 2019, after 37 years working in the Criminal Division Court Arraignment Office. In her position as supervisor, she was responsible for arranging court appearances for defendants in jail.

Denise's passion is traveling. She has been to Ireland, Italy, Aruba, Bahama, and Key West to mention just a few of her vacation spots. Additionally, she and her husband enjoy hiking and have hiked at the Grand Canyon, the Smoky Mountains, Yellowstone National Park, Bryce Canyon, Yosemite National Park, and the Acadia National Park.

Denise belongs to a group of twenty women and one man (her husband) who play pickle ball two or three times a week. She is also a photographer and enjoys taking photos of nature and her grandchildren. Denise loves to read and belongs to a book club.

Denise is an avid tennis fan. She has been to the USA Open several times as well as the Southern & Western Open in Cincinnati.

In 2015 Denise's sister was diagnosed with ovarian cancer, which led Denise to brca genetic testing. On August 31, 2017, she was diagnosed with ovarian and fallopian tube cancer. On February 13, 2018, she finished her chemo treatment and is now thankfully cancer free. Denise is so grateful to all her family, friends and coworkers who were so supportive throughout her struggle with cancer. She calls her husband, Keith, her best friend, and her rock who got her through this most challenging time in her life.

Denise is married to Keith and has two sons, Adam and Aaron, and daughters-in-law, Uta and Julie. They also have five precious grandsons (Dane, Ashton, Ryan, Graham, and Evan) who they adore.

We wish Denise many more travels and continued good health in her future.

*Message from President
Continued from page 1*

luncheon will not be scheduled and members appreciation day in September will be replaced with another format. The total cost to you of these increases, if you attend all six luncheons next year is only \$23 for the entire year. These changes are effective as of January 1, 2023.

On behalf of the entire board may I wish you all a joyous holiday season and a new year of good health and happiness.

THE EXPLOSION OF THE ISLAND QUEEN

by Connie Przybyla

THE FOLLOWING ARTICLE IS THE SEVENTH IN A SERIES OF ARTICLES WHERE WE DETAIL SOME FASCINATING AND INTERESTING HISTORY OF OUR GREAT COUNTY. WE HOPE YOU ENJOY.



On September 9, 1947, the downtown lunch crowd was thinning out on that sunny day in Pittsburgh. The Island Queen, (called the Big Liz) a dazzling and lush riverboat, was docked at the Monongahela Wharf at the foot of Wood Street. The riverboat had five decks, was 284 feet long and was all steel and glass enclosed with a capacity of 4,000 passengers. The Island Queen had arrived from Cincinnati on September 6th for eight days of moonlight dance excursions.

September 9th was an off day for the crew with no excursions scheduled. Around 1 pm that afternoon over half of the crew of 90 were ashore. A few were still working on the riverboat and approximately fifteen others were napping on their bunks. As Captain Charles Hall walked off the riverboat, he noticed a loose stanchion. The captain asked his chief engineer, Frank Dickow, to repair the issue. At approximately 1:14 pm, an explosion shook the Island Queen followed by 200-foot flames which in a few seconds engulfed the riverboat's structure. Joseph Miller, manager of the Union Bus Terminal, who was standing in the terminal yard when the blast occurred said, "I picked myself up and at first, I could not figure what happened. It was as if an atomic bomb had gone off. Then I saw the boat burning and ran across First Avenue and notified the fire department." The flames were so intense that the Island Queen quickly became a skeleton. Hundreds of windows were smashed

along Water Street and the Blvd. of the Allies by the explosion. Jagged pieces of steel and scorching hot cinders showered four to five blocks of the waterfront. Dozens of cars in the wharf parking lot were set on fire or had their paint melt off from the tremendous heat. People rushed to the riverfront to view the inferno. So many people crowded onto the Smithfield Street Bridge that it was feared the bridge would collapse. Spectators on Mount Washington lined Grandview Ave. Students and teachers from St. Mary of the Mount High School rushed out of class to get a better view of the devastation below.



Firefighters and police raced to the dock, fighting their way through thousands of people who poured out of every building in sight. Incredibly, some Island Queen crew members made it off the ship still breathing - either by being blown into the water or by diving into the river. When the first rescuers reached the scene, 10 or 12 crew members could be seen bobbing in the water. The towboat picked up several dazed and bleeding survivors, the

rest were quickly brought to safety. By this time, the Island Queen's sides had turned a scorching red inferno as the fire ate through the steamer's interior dance floor.

After burning for approximately two hours, almost everything that could identify the wreckage as that of a ship, had sunk below the surface of the Monongahela. Everything on the landward side was gone except the housing of one of the huge paddle wheels with the name "Island Queen" painted on it.

The cost of the catastrophe was high. Nineteen people (all crew members from Cincinnati) met their death. The ship, valued at \$600,000 (\$6.4 million in current value), proved to be almost a total loss.

The U.S. Coast Guard Board laid blame on negligence on the part of the chief engineer who was one of the nineteen victims. He was welding the loose deck stanchion, that the captain asked him to repair, near the fuel oil bunkers (bunkers which could contain 30,000 gallons of oil), when a stray spark combined with rivets that may have been loose on deck and gas seeping from the oil tank sparked the explosion. The hull of the ship was too damaged to warrant repairs and was deemed to be scrapped in April of 1948.

The Island Queen disaster was the first and one of the worst river disasters in the history of the Pittsburgh.

RIVERS OF STEEL TOUR

by JoAnna McQuaide



On August 19, 2022, ACRA members and guests boarded the Rivers of Steel boat, Explorer, for an informative cruise of the three rivers. The boat itself is used as an educational one for school children who cruise the rivers and explore the shore and waters while conducting science experiments. The microscopes were under wraps while we were there. But we were not there for science but to learn new and old facts about the rivers and surrounding communities.

The narrated tour took us around the point and down the Ohio River with information that both surprised and affirmed what most Pittsburghers thought they knew. Interesting points of interest were: the many indigenous tribes who inhabited the area prior to discovery by the European settlers, both French and British; how the rivers and shoreline looked before the introduction of the lock and dam system; Carrie furnace equipment, an example of pre-WWII steel making, on display at Station Square; and is there really a fourth river under the Point?



RETIREMENT CHECK 2023 DATES

- Thursday, January 19, 2023
- Thursday, February 16, 2023
- Thursday, March 16, 2023
- Thursday, April 20, 2023
- Thursday, May 18, 2023
- Thursday, June 15, 2023
- Thursday, July 20, 2023
- Thursday, August 17, 2023
- Thursday, September 21, 2023
- Thursday, October 19, 2023
- Thursday, November 16, 2023
- Thursday, December 21, 2023



RECIPES BY PAM

by Pam Long

PUMPKIN CRANBERRY BREAD

- 8 ounces pumpkin puree
- 2 large eggs
- 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- 1/3 cup orange juice
- 1 1/2 cups sugar
- 1 3/4 cups flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cloves
- 1 pinch ground ginger
- 2 cups fresh cranberries

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Coat a 9x5 loaf pan with baking spray or grease and flour it.

Whisk together the pumpkin puree, eggs, oil, orange juice and sugar until combined.

In a separate bowl combine the flour, baking soda, salt, cinnamon, nutmeg, cloves, and ginger.

Combine the dry ingredients with the wet ingredients until combined then add the cranberries.

Pour into loaf pan and bake for 50-55 minutes.

Allow to cool for 5 minutes before removing from loaf pan.

A VISIT TO NARCISI WINERY

by Hugh Hachmeister



A group of 25 ACRA members and their guests enjoyed a beautiful late summer afternoon visit to the beautiful Narcisi Winery in Gibsonia, PA. Narcisi team member Roberto, a native of Italy provided an in-depth tour of the grounds where he explained the varieties of grapes and their care in the vineyard. He explained that about 5% of the grapes used in the winemaking process were grown on-site. The balance of grapes and juices are grown in Northwest PA along Lake Erie and in California. Once the grapes have been harvested, they are moved to the winemaking area where the wine is aged in large stainless-steel tanks where it ferments, prior to being bottled. Narcisi has over 15 varieties - white, red, blends, blushes, and fruit wines.

Following the tour, we were met by Mary Ann who led us to the second-floor wine tasting room where we all enjoyed sampling 6 varieties of Narcisi's delicious wines. We learned the five steps of wine tasting - Color, Swirl, Smell, Taste and Savor. Following our tasting, many in our group extended the visit to the Narcisi Winery by enjoying a delicious meal with a glass of their favorite wine.



CHANGE AT ACRA NEWSLETTER

by Connie Przybyla

On a personal note, I am resigning as the editor of the ACRA newsletter. After 5 years in the position, I think it is time to turn over the newsletter to someone with some new and fresh ideas. This edition is my final newsletter. I will continue as a board member and intend to, with the other board members, try to make the association even better than it already has become.

Kathy Burk has agreed to take over the position of ACRA newsletter editor and Guillermo Cole has agreed to help assist with the newsletter. Kathy and Guillermo will be taking over immediately, and I wish them all the success with the ACRA newsletter.

I want to thank everyone that has contributed an article over the past 5 years. Also, I could not have been able to put out a newsletter without the help of Joan McMahon. She has been with me from the beginning, helping me edit the newsletter, deciding on subject articles and contributing articles for every edition these past five years. I deeply appreciate everything she did to help me. Thank you, Joan.

Good luck to Kathy and Guillermo. I know they will do a fantastic job!

ELECTIONS RESULTS

Congratulations to the following ACRA members who were elected to a two-year term to the ACRA Board of Directors:

Hugh Hachmeister, Donna Johnson-Smith, Pamela Long, Connie Przybyla and Sharon Silvestri.

We have no doubt their skills and years of experience will prove to be a major asset to ACRA.

IN MEMORIAM*

MONTHS AUGUST, SEPTEMBER, OCTOBER 2022

*As provided by the Allegheny County Retirement Board

Name	Date of Death	Name	Date of Death	Name	Date of Death
Abbott, Rita	7/27/2022	Grabofski, Barbara	9/2/2022	Perry, Candice	9/24/2022
Beers, William	8/25/2022	Holtz, Joan	9/11/2022	Pucciarelli, Deborah	7/10/2022
Blasco, Carmen	8/22/2022	Huwalt, Thomas Jr	8/23/2022	Russell, Constance	6/4/2022
Carney Mary E	6/5/2022	Kos, Barbara A	6/1/2022	Severino, Carlene	7/25/2022
Fedor, Roberta	6/23/2022	Laurso, Nick	8/30/2022	Slack, Nancy	6/6/2022
Fields, Elva	6/9/2022	Lehrman, John	7/27/2022	Tyson, Stephanie	6/28/2022
Fierst, Robert	8/7/2022	Lukas, Anna Marie	7/18/2022	Wayne, George	9/19/2022
Fischer, Joan	8/31/2022	Moran, Gary	9/3/2022	Williams, Charles	8/13/2022
Goga, Dolores J	7/5/2022	Nicora, Cornelia	8/23/2022	Yialouris, Evangeline	9/8/2022
		Nixon, Gilberta Ann	6/4/2022		

FINDING RELIABLE HEALTH CARE INFORMATION ONLINE

by Joan McMahon

On the internet there are many medical websites offering a myriad of healthcare information. Some are reliable. Some are not. How do you choose which website to trust? Generally, websites sponsored by the federal government, such as MedlinePlus.gov, are a good source of information, as are those of medical schools and large professional organizations.

Some questions to consider when seeking online healthcare or medical information are:

1. Who sponsors the website?
 - .gov identifies a U.S. government agency.
 - .edu identifies an educational institution, like a school, college, or university.
 - .org usually identifies nonprofit organizations, such as professional groups, scientific, medical or research societies.
 - .com identifies commercial websites, such as businesses and pharmaceutical companies.
2. Who wrote the information? Is this person an expert in the field? Is the information written by or reviewed by a health professional?
3. When was the information written? Is it current?
4. What is the purpose of the website? Is it based on scientific evidence or on the writer's opinion? Is it meant to educate or to sell a product?
5. Does the website promise quick, miracle cures?

It is important to use good judgement when utilizing online health care information. The information accessed should be considered as one tool rather than as an absolute. Remember that it is essential to discuss online findings with your doctor before making any changes to your healthcare. The internet provides a rich resource of health-related information which is best viewed cautiously and with common sense.

ELDER LAW

by Connie Przybyla



On October 19, 2022, the law firm of Zacharia Brown PC gave a presentation on elder law and estate planning. This topic was requested by members of ACRA. Attorney Carl Zacharia and Attorney James Benedek spoke on the complicated procedure when applying for Medicaid and the Medicaid 5 year look process. They informed members of the traps and difficulties to be aware of and strategies used to protect you from traps when applying for Medicaid. They discussed durable power of attorney, and the other types of power attorney available in Pennsylvania.

Members were able to ask the attorneys questions regarding concerns they may have about their own situation. At the end of the presentation two publications were provided to members who attended the luncheon. These publications can be accessed through our website.



Zacharia Brown Elder Law can be reached at 724-942-6200 or visit their website at <https://www.pittsburghelderlaw.com/>.



SOCIAL SECURITY FRAUD AND SCAM PREVENTION TOOLS

Below are websites that are resources regarding protection of social security scams.

- Protect Yourself from Social Security Scams - www.ssa.gov/scam
- Phone scams and how to report them - <https://oig.ssa.gov/scam-awareness/scam-alert/>
- Fraud Prevention and Reporting - www.ssa.gov/fraud
- Protect your Social Security number from identity theft - <https://blog.ssa.gov/protecting-your-social-security-number-from-identity-theft/>