



# Allegheny County

February 2024

## Retirees Association

# NEWSLETTER

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

Website: <http://acretirees.org> • Email: [acretireeassociation@gmail.com](mailto:acretireeassociation@gmail.com)

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Jack Exler, *President*  
Marge Lubawy, *Vice President*  
Kathy Burk, *Secretary*  
Cathy Thomas, *Treasurer*

Connie Przybyla  
Donna Johnson-Smith  
Hugh Hachmeister  
Pam Long  
Sharon Silvestri

### NEWSLETTER

Kathy Burk, *Editor*  
Guillermo Cole, *Contributing Writer*

## Message from THE PRESIDENT

HAPPY 2024! It is January 19th, as I prepare my first Message from the President, I keep looking out the window watching the snow fall. The forecast is 2 to 4 or 3 to 6 inches depending on your local news station. What I am thinking about is shoveling my long driveway.

Time to get back to the task at hand. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Guy Tumolo and JoAnna McQuaide for their service, commitment and leadership to the association as they transition off the board.

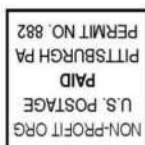
It is my pleasure and honor to join the board. I have attended several board meetings in 2023; and the board is made up of an amazing group of individuals - Marge Lubawy, Cathy Thomas, Connie Przybyla, Donna Johnson-Smith, Hugh Hachmeister, Pam Long, Sharon Silvestri, and Kathy Burk.

On the national level, 2024 politics will be all about the Presidential, Senate and Congressional elections. . Also, I know that we will all be looking forward to all the political commercials and political advertisements on our local television channels and radio air waves.

Closer to home, a new County administration will be put in place under the newly elected Allegheny County Executive, Sara Innamorado; and Allegheny County Treasurer, Erica Rocchi Brusselars who are replacing Rich Fitzgerald and John Weinstein respectively. Ms. Innamorado and Ms. Rocchi Brusselars have become members of the Retirement Board of Allegheny.

I attended the January Retirement Board meeting; and took the opportunity introduced myself to each board member as the new president of the Allegheny County

*Continued on next page*



*Address Service Requested*

Allegheny County  
Retirees Association  
P.O. Box 15285  
Pittsburgh, PA 15237





## NEW RETIREES LIST

DECEMBER	JANUARY
Dissen, Richard	Janocsko, George
Layton, James	Rechendorff, Charlotte
Podbensek, William	Clair, Joanne
Cudlipp, Charles	Cummins, Susan
Morgan, Daniel	McDowell, Patty Jo
Vinci, Janice	Oakes, Emmanuel
Stamper, Jeffrey	Perrett, Dorothy
Murray, Janice	Sauders, Mark
Priddy-Sangma, Brenda	Zielinski, Leonard
Mehalko, Anna	Woessner, Jennifer
Knight, Mark	Thompson, Sherry
	Yakubisin, Joseph
	Montgomery, David
	Ireland, John

*Continued from page 1*

Retirees Association. My goal is to attend the monthly board meetings to continue building a relationship with the Retirement board as started by Guy Tumolo over his tenure as president. I will report back to membership any interesting facts and/or relevant information regarding the pension fund.

Now for the fun stuff! The following are some of the highlights of the interesting and exciting programs and events in 2024.

Our first program and luncheon is scheduled for Wednesday, March 20th with a presentation on George Westinghouse and His Legacy by David Bear; in June, the annual picnic will be held at the Lodge in North Park; in July, come spend an afternoon at PNC Park rooting on our Pittsburgh Pirates; November's program will be the annual meeting; and representatives to give us updates on Medicare and the Pension Fund; and in December will be the Holiday Party with good food, games, raffles and a sing-a-long. Go to the website: <http://acretirees.org> for more detail information on all the upcoming programs and events.

I just looked out the window again. Now its time to shovel the driveway...again!

Take care and I look forward to seeing and meeting you in the upcoming months.

Jack Exler  
President



Name	Date of Death	Name	Date of Death	Name	Date of Death
Burley, Angeline	9/20/23	Harper, Stephen	7/31/23	Celedonia, Marlene	10/18/23
Degelmann, Barbara	9/24/23	Healy, Rose	10/23/23	Munsie, John	9/19/23
DeSabato, Edward	10/19/24	Hermes, H. Roy	9/08/23	Seehausen, Noreen	9/22/23
James, Esther,	11/27/23	Holland, Phyllis	9/16/23	Puskar, Annette	9/22/23
Fagan, Suzanne	8/23/23	King, Thelma	9/26/23	Roberson, Ruby	10/10/23
Justus, Frances	11/9/23	Kinney, Joann	9/7/2023	Scolieri, Agostine	9/1/23
Hobbins, Frederick	10/20/23	Landis, Kerry	9/2/23	Story, James	9/24/23
Perkins, Frederick	10/27/23	Leonard, Alfonso	8/23/23	Rojas, Sylvia	11/1/23
Gavin-Isaac, Genevieve	10/11/23	Lewis, Donna	9/3/23	Sluganski, Theodore	11/1/23
Anderson, George	11/17/23	Herring, Marjorie	10/25/23	Vaughn, Amelia	9/13/23

\*As provided by the Allegheny County Retirement Board



# *In Memoriam* **PATRICIA CRAY:**

**Former ACRA President, Lifelong Actress**

*by Guillermo Cole*

Patricia Cray, a retiree from the Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas, passed away last October after suffering complications from a fall at home. She was president of the ACRA board prior to being diagnosed with Parkinson's disease and moving to Allentown, PA in 2015 to be close to her son John Gabriel, daughter-in-law Kacey and two grandsons, Huxley and Bodie.

Patricia was a lifelong actress. From the time her mom signed her up for ballet lessons and her first recital at the Syria Mosque at the tender age of four, she was on her way to a theatrical career that would take her to New York City and Broadway and back to her hometown, where she would continue to pursue her passion as a side gig while working full-time in the Court of Common Pleas.

Growing up in Carrick, Patricia not only took dance lessons but also learned how to play the piano and organ during her childhood years. While attending Carrick High School, she performed in class plays as well as several productions at the semi-professional Pittsburgh Playhouse, which she said introduced her to "the level of discipline that would be required moving forward."

After graduating high school, Patricia performed in local theater, trade shows and corporate marketing campaigns and took classes at Pitt. She left for New York in 1962, just before turning twenty-one, and moved into the Rehearsal Club, a well-known boarding house for aspiring young actresses. She took acting classes and worked a part-time job in a beauty salon to pay the bills.



Within six weeks, Patricia successfully auditioned for the national touring company of "Take Her, She's Mine." She earned the coveted Actors Equity card and embarked on a seven-month tour. The show opened in Philadelphia and played in theaters in major cities from coast to coast and everywhere in between. More acting work followed throughout the 1960's, including the World's Fair, daytime television, summer stock and off-Broadway shows.

By the end of the decade, as her acting career slowed down, Patricia decided to complete her college degree and enrolled in Quinnipiac University in Connecticut. After graduating in 1971, she took a job as a secretary at Reader's Digest.

When a class action lawsuit was filed against the magazine alleging sex discrimination in its hiring, Patricia was promoted to field manager in its school-based subscription fundraising program. In her first year, as the only female among the compa-

ny's thirteen field managers, Patricia more than proved her mettle by outselling the other twelve field managers combined.

If she could be such a resounding success at something she didn't particularly like, Patricia figured she owed it to herself to give acting another shot. After all, it was her first true love. So she returned to New York, juggling acting and evening secretary jobs where she would meet her husband.

Patricia eventually landed her first Broadway show, Austin Pendleton's "John Gabriel Borkman," but had to leave the show three months after its opening when she became an expectant mother. It was a bittersweet moment that she memorialized by naming her son John Gabriel.

After her son's birth and having lived and worked in New York for more than 20 years, Patricia divorced and returned to Pittsburgh in the 1980's with her toddler-age son in tow. She earned a law degree from the University of Pittsburgh and became an accomplished law clerk specializing in family law and working for Common Pleas Court Judge Robert A. Kelly.

While working in Common Pleas Court, Patricia continued her lifelong career in acting with roles in many Pennsylvania lottery commercials as well as a number of Pittsburgh-filmed TV series and movies, such as Houseguest, Wonder Boys, The Kill Point, Love & Other Drugs, Won't Back Down and One Dollar.



## ACRA HOLIDAY LUNCHEON 2023



AND A GOOD TIME WAS HAD BY ALL!

### Act 77— SENIOR CITIZEN TAX RELIEF

Allegheny County residents who are at least 60 years old, have an annual income of \$30,000 or less (counting just half of Social Security), and have owned and lived in their current Allegheny County residence for at least 10 years are eligible for a 30% reduction in their county tax bill.



Applications for 2024 will be available this spring on the Allegheny County website:  
[www.alleghenycounty.us/treasurer](http://www.alleghenycounty.us/treasurer)

## ALLEGHENY COUNTY FIRSTS

There are numerous innovations and illustrious events that were born of the resourcefulness of the people of our region. The Senator John Heinz History Center has compiled a long list of these contributions, some of which we share here.

- The first Ferris Wheel was built here in 1893.
- The Pittsburgh Pirates hosted the first World Series in 1903.
- Pittsburgh's Nellie Bly became the first female war correspondent during World War I.
- Isaly's introduced the Klondike Bar in 1929.
- Jonas Salk developed the Polio Vaccine at the University of Pittsburgh in 1955.
- The nation's first EMT Program was founded in the Hill District in 1967.
- The Big Mac was introduced here in 1967.
- Mr. Yuk was created in Pittsburgh by Dr. Richard Moriarty in 1971.



Information obtained from the reverse side of a county map issued by Allegheny County Department of Communications.





## RECIPES BY PAM

by Pam Long

### LEMON ALMOND COOKIES

$\frac{3}{4}$  cup butter softened

1 cup plus 3 tablespoons  
sugar divided

1 large egg

$1\frac{1}{2}$  tablespoons freshly-  
grated lemon zest

6 tablespoons finely ground  
almonds ( $\frac{1}{2}$  cup slivered)

$1\frac{1}{2}$  cups flour

In a bowl with an electric mixer, cream together butter and 1 cup sugar. Beat in egg, zest, and almonds. Beat in flour, a little at a time. Beat the dough until combined well and chill it covered for 2 hours.

Form dough into walnut size balls and arrange them 2 inches apart on lightly greased baking sheet. Dip bottom of a glass moistened in remaining 3 tablespoons of sugar and with it press down in cookies, flattening them to about 2 inches in diameter. (Work out a system. The best method is to rinse the glass after each press, barely moistened, dip in the sugar and press again.)

Bake cookies in the middle of a preheated 350-degree oven 10-12 minutes, until golden around the edges. Transfer to rack, cool. Makes about 36 cookies.

Enjoy!!

## A MAJESTIC BRONZE STATUE and the LOWLY COPPER PENNY

by Kathy Burk

To the casual observer, the Mary Schenley Memorial Fountain appears to be something from another world. The complete fountain-statue is titled *The Song of Nature* and was designed by renowned sculptor Victor David Brenner. This magnificent work was installed as public art in 1918 and can now be seen in front of the Frick Fine Arts Building in Oakland.

*Song of Nature* presents an imposing figure of the Greek earth god Pan positioned above the fountain, dangling his cloven hoof menacingly over the edge of the statue base. A powerful image of a female figure, known as "Sweet Humanity," rises gracefully away from Pan, and up toward the heavens, all the while playing the lyre. The base of the statue is inscribed with the words, "*A Song of Nature, Pan the Earth God Answers to the Harmony and Magic Tones Sung to the Lyre by Sweet Humanity.*" This majestic structure stands as a tribute to Mary Schenley, one of Pittsburgh's most generous contributors.

So, what could this statue possibly have to do with those pesky little pennies that mingle with the loose change in your pocket? Just look to the Lincoln penny to see the connection. The face of the Lincoln cent is another great work of Victor D. Brenner. Along with magnificent statues, Victor D. Brenner also created the image of Abraham Lincoln that has been appearing on the copper penny since 1909. This is the longest circulating coin design in United States history.

The design was controversial because popular opinion held that images of presidents should not



appear on the face of a coin. It was believed that they would be painful reminders of how British coins were designed to pay tribute to the monarchy from which the American patriots gained independence. Many believed that, in a democracy, presidential images had no place on government-issued currency. In the early 20th century those sentiments began to soften.

*The Song of Nature* remains standing more than a century after its installation, welcoming people from all over the world to Oakland's public recreation area. Both works offer symbolism that emphasizes the necessity of loftier ideals. *The Song of Nature* symbolizes the higher values of humanity rising above the depravity of earthly existence. Similarly, Lincoln's face on the penny has come to represent righteousness prevailing over iniquity.

Much of the information about the "Song of Nature" Fountain was obtained from *Discovering Pittsburgh's Sculpture* by Vernon Gay and Marilyn Evert, 1983. Information about United States coinage was obtained from the Danbury mint website.



# UPCOMING LUNCHEON PROGRAMS

## All luncheons start at Noon at the DoubleTree Hotel by Hilton

Take Exit 67 off Parkway West, I-376  
Turn left onto Mansfield Avenue  
Turn right at the DoubleTree Hotel by the Hilton sign.  
ACRA members – \$20    Guests with reservation – \$25

*Mail all reservation checks to:*

ACRA  
P.O. Box 15285  
Pittsburgh, PA 15237

Reservations are required to ensure adequate space and food. Reservations and money are due no later than the RSVP date. Tickets are not available at the luncheons. Further information about each event is available on the ACRA website: <http://acretirees.org>

**03  
20  
24**

**March 20, 2024 -  
George Westinghouse and His Legacy**  
RSVP and payment must be received  
by 3/13/2024.

**04  
17  
24**

**April 17, 2024 -  
Discovering a Family History:  
From the Famous and Heroic to the  
Infamous and Notorious**  
RSVP and payment must be received  
by 4/10/2024.

**05  
15  
24**

**May 15, 2024 -  
Notorious Pittsburgh**  
RSVP and payment must be received  
by 5/8/2024.

**06  
19  
24**

**June 19, 2024 -  
ACRA Annual Picnic**  
RSVP and payment must be received  
by 6/14/2024.

**07  
24  
24**

**July 24, 2024 -  
Pittsburgh Pirate Game at PNC Park**  
RSVP and payment must be received  
by 6/16/2024

**09  
18  
24**

**September 18, 2024 -  
Fun Times!**  
RSVP with payment must be received  
by 9/11/2024.

**10  
16  
24**

**October 16, 2024 -  
To be Determined**  
RSVP with payment must be received  
by 10/9/2024.

**11  
20  
24**

**November 20, 2024 -  
Medicare Updates**  
RSVP with payment must be received  
by 11/13/2024.

**12  
11  
24**

**December 11, 2024 -  
Annual Holiday Celebration**  
RSVP with payment must be received  
by 12/4/2024.

## BENEFITS OF ACRA MEMBERSHIP

For a mere \$20 annual membership fee you can experience the benefits of a group that is prominently positioned to influence retiree-related decisions made by the Retirement Board and the County Executive. Other benefits include:

- **Interesting programs and educational speakers**
- **Meeting your colleagues for fellowship over a nice lunch at a reasonable cost**
- **Regular meeting notices as well as notices of special events**
- **Access to the ACRA quarterly newsletter**
- **ACRA voting privileges**

If you would like to become a member, a registration form is available at: [www.acretirees.org](http://www.acretirees.org).  
You may also request a registration form by leaving a voice message at (412) 459-7674