

Newsletter

Volume 32, No. 1
Spring, 2024

www.delcopasr.org

John R. Della Guardia, Editor
Delaware County, Pennsylvania

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Visit Delaware County PASR on our website at <http://www.delcopasr.org/>

Don't forget to return your Volunteer Service Form to:

Phyllis Simmons,
1108 Gateway Ave.,
Garnet Valley, PA
19060 by June 30,
2024

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dr. Janice Hoffman Willis, President



It's hard to believe that three years have gone by since I assumed the role of your President in 2021. Although our manpower is few in numbers, we remain steadfast and resolute in our commitment to you, the members of the Delaware County PASR Chapter. We continuously seek fresh ideas to engage and enrich our membership. At our October meeting, we had the privilege of hosting representatives from the United States Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC). Any suggestions you may have for future presentations are welcome.

This year, the House of Delegates Statewide Conference held in Cranberry, Pennsylvania, was particularly noteworthy. It came to the State's attention that four of the six Regional Committee Chairs are Delaware County Chapter Members. Thus, our influence extends beyond our immediate boundaries, making a significant impact in the region.

Our December 6, 2023, Holiday Luncheon was a **Celebration of Service** for four of our deceased members, and I extend my heartfelt thanks to all who attended. The atmosphere in the room was filled with an undeniable sense of camaraderie as we celebrated the lives of Robert Collier, Henry (Hank) Field, Stephen Kupsov, and Dr. Margaret Wales. We also were honored by the presence of PASR Executive Director, Kristin Holjes, Regional Director, David Noyes, and Past Regional Director, Judith L. Guise.

As we approach the Spring Educational Excellence Luncheon on May 1, 2024, hosted at The Ballrooms at Boothwyn -- Lia's Catering -- I wish to commend the Educational Support Committee for their efforts in expanding our financial awards to support classroom teachers and school projects. Further, we are thrilled to announce that the State PASR Headquarters will be honoring Philadelphia Inquirer



At the House of Delegates: Standing from L: Dr. Janice Hoffman Willis and Anne Mosakowski. Seated: Caroline Fedena



Kristin Holjes, PASR Executive Director, Pamela Kupsov, David Noyes, Regional Director.



Joe DiStefano will be honored at the PASR 2024 Spring Luncheon by State PASR representatives because of his investigative reporting into the PSERS Retirement Fund’s investment practices.

Joe has been an Inquirerer business news reportrer and columnist since 2008. He has reported from London, Mexico City, Wall Street, prisions, and farm labor camps.

PSERS has been the subject of scores of Joe’s articles. Financed by working teachers, taxpayers, and investment profits, PSERS is among the 25 largest pension funds in the United States. It sends out \$6 billion in pension checks yearly to 250,000 retired former school workers. Joe chronicled the massive FBI investigation in the fund and was awarded the Gerald Loeb Award

Reporter, Joseph DiStefano, for his investigative reporting on the massive probe of our Pension Fund (PSERS). This recognition will take place during our May 1, 2024 Luncheon.

Your invitation to the luncheon is included in this newsletter. It will be a time of fellowship where we can celebrate the achievements of our Honorees. If you are unable to attend, please consider donating to one of the many charities listed on the invitation. Additionally, mark your calendars for the lunch and tour of Lima Estates on Thursday, June 5, 2024. Further details will be provided via PASR email.

I encourage you to consider accepting a leadership position as Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, or Committee Chair for Legislation, or to serve as a committee member. Our monthly meetings are held every first Wednesday of the month, except for January, February, July, and August. As a member, you are warmly welcome to join us at these meetings.

Thank you for your ongoing support and dedication to our Chapter. Together, let us continue to make a positive impact on our community and beyond.

EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT COMMITTEE

Mary Anne Caporaletti
Educational Support
Committee Chair



While no two academic years are exactly the same for our committee’s work, one thing remains clear and consistent – public education needs the support of its retirees now more than ever. Our colleagues still in the classroom are being asked to do more and more with fewer and fewer resources. And as we know, a teacher’s working conditions are her students’ learning conditions. We see this clearly in the nature of our classroom grant applications – appeals for very basic materials and activities that should be the right of all learners and their dedicated teachers.

We see it also in the descriptions submitted for our Woodson Recognition winners. They go above and beyond because, if they do not, their students might suffer from the life-long consequences of an inadequate education.

Finally, we see what is happening to public education in the paucity of applications for our scholarships. Often, the conditions of our contemporary classrooms and the treatment of their teachers, are less than inspiring to a student who might otherwise choose to enter public education. Surely this isn’t the view we want our graduates to have of a professional that we all loved – and labored at – for decades.



As we applaud our active colleagues and their students at this year’s Recognition Luncheon, let us ask ourselves, “Where do we go from here?”

PASR

Pennsylvania Association of School Retirees
DELAWARE COUNTY CHAPTER

Annual Spring Luncheon Celebration of Excellence in Education

Wednesday, May 1, 2024

Ballrooms at Boothwyn - Lia's Catering

1405 Meeting House Rd., Boothwyn, PA 19061

Family and friends are invited

Cost - \$27.50

(Cost subsidized by Delco PASR)

The Buffet Will Open at Noon

The PASR Educational Support Committee Presents

Lauretta Woodson Awards

Plus... Baskets Raffle

Please RSVP by April 29, 2024 to:

Dr. Janice HoffmanWillis, 1437 Fresno Rd., Wilmington, DE 19803

(Check payable to Delco PASR. Addressed envelope enclosed for your convenience.)

This Invitation is also available on our website: www.delcopasr.org



PASR Annual Spring Luncheon, May 1, 2024

Your Name _____ Phone _____
(In the event we need to contact you)

Your School District _____

Please RSVP and send check payable to Delco PASR to:

Dr. Janice HoffmanWillis, 1437 Fresno Rd., Wilmington, DE 19803

Deadline: April 29, 2024

(Return envelope enclosed)

No. Attending: _____ x \$27.50 each (Subsidized by Delco PASR)..... \$ _____

Some members have inquired about ways to help with Delco PASR initiatives. We offer these possibilities:

DONATION TO (If you can't attend, please consider sending a donation)

Social Services - helps retired public school employees in need of financial and emotional support..... \$ _____

Bernadine Center - supports the Center's food pantry..... \$ _____

L-PEC - a legislative voice for all school retirees, works for Cost-of-Living Adjustments (COLAs)..... \$ _____

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED..... \$ _____

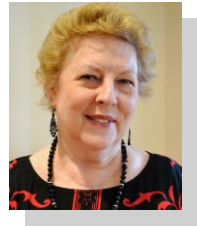
Please consider bringing a canned food donation for the Bernardine Food Pantry in Chester, PA.

We welcome your still useable shoes. Soles 4 Souls ensures they are put to good use.

Help KozyKids with a donation of winter hats, scarves, and gloves for elementary children.

Membership Notes

Sue Stevens
Membership Chair



Greetings! fellow Delaware County PASR members, and Happy Spring! Here we are looking forward to our Annual Spring Luncheon. This is the event of the year. At this celebration, we really show what we do best — support education and encourage fellowship among our members and their guests. At this luncheon, we will be honoring graduating seniors and deserving teachers and support personnel with grants and awards to help them further their education and reward their hard work and good teaching skills and ideas. It's also a great chance to meet and greet old friends, make some new ones, and enjoy a wonderful meal together.

If you haven't attended one of our prior luncheons, especially if you are one of our newer members, I hope you will plan to attend this one. It promises to be worth your while. Please don't hesitate to invite a friend to come with you. We are always happy to have extra guests and it's always a fun time. There will be an interesting speaker, as well as raffle baskets, a 50-50 drawing, and a great time for everyone. This is also a good chance for anyone who might be thinking of joining PASR, and the Delaware County chapter in particular, to find out more about us and what we do. You can find the invitation inside this newsletter. What could be easier?

We are always looking to grow our chapter and PASR in general, especially now when we are really in need of a COLA and very close to making it happen. We can certainly use your help!

See you there??!!



DELAWARE COUNTY PASR MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name _____ Phone (Home) _____

Address _____ Phone (Cell) _____

City/State/Zip _____ Email _____

Year Retired _____ District Retired from _____

Position Before Retirement _____ Birth Date _____

Delco PASR Dues: Annual \$15.00 _____ Life \$250.00 _____ *Associate \$10.00 _____

*Associate memberships: anyone interested in the work of PASR; active school employees age 50 or more; former teachers who are not annuitants of a school employee retirement system; former school employees retired from a non-public school; spouses of active members. Associate members shall not be eligible to vote or hold office.

NOTE: To become a member of the State PASR, please also include those dues as follows:

State PASR Dues: Annual \$60.00 _____ Half-Life _____ Life \$700.00 _____

Please make all checks payable to: **Delaware County PASR**

Please mail checks and applications to: **Sue Stevens, 2955 Summit Circle, Aston, PA 19014-1624**



2024 MEETING SCHEDULE

All members are encouraged to attend. Currently, meetings are held at the Aston Library, 3270 Concord Road, Aston, PA 19014-1939. The start time is 10:30.

--April 3, 2024, --May 1, 2024 (Spring Luncheon (See Invitation and RSVP, p. 3)

--June 5, 2024

LEGISLATIVE AND L/PEC

SPRING 2024, UPDATE



According to Mark Krempa, PASR Administrative Officer, we are closer to securing a COLA than we have been since 2001. However, it is crucial that we keep pressure on our state senators to approve H B 1416. Constituent pressure remains our best tool in persuading the General Assembly. Anyone willing to support this effort is not only welcome but needed. Therefore, reach out to business leaders in your community and your relatives and friends, and encourage them to communicate with their PA state senator.

The next few months are critical, as budget negotiations will take shape, and that will be our last best hope of getting a COLA this year; so please make every effort that you can to make our voices heard. Help in contacting your legislator is available at <https://www.pasr.org/legislative-form/?id=3>. Leave the Member ID field blank if a non-PASR member.

It has been over 20 years since our last COLA. Our PA Legislators, on the other hand, have received COLA's that are pegged to inflation **every year** since 1995, which, of course, will increase the pension payments that they will receive at retirement. Over the past three years, their COLAs amount to just under 19% in increases to their salaries. Something seems amiss here.

Pre-Act 9 annuitants retired with lower salaries and therefore lower pensions than other annuitants, and they were not recipients of the 25% increase in their pension that post-Act 9 annuitants received. (Legislators received a 50% increase in their pensions as a result of Act 9!). Something seems amiss here.

Since 2001, PSERS retirees have lost at least 1/2 to 2/3 of the value of their pensions due to inflation. Conservative calculations of inflation (Cost of Living) reflect that prices have increased over 73% since 1990 and over 50% since the last COLA was enacted. But without a COLA, retirement income stayed the same. Something seems amiss here.

The average Pre-Act 9 annuitant is 83 years old and receives a pension of less than \$19,000 per year. About one-third of all PSERS annuitants have a pension of **under** \$10,000 per year. When we consider all retirees, the average PSERS annuitant receives less than \$27,000 per year. Probably the most stunning fact for you to consider is this: all annuitants who retired before 1986 have a yearly pension below \$7,623. Something seems outrageously amiss here.

As for funding a COLA, consider this: The cost of HB 1416 is **\$1.77 billion** 'amortized' over ten years. The money is available to pay for this. The PA "Rainy Day Fund" has **\$6 billion**, and there is an additional **surplus of \$8 billion**, for a total of **\$14 billion in surplus** funds that could be used to fund a COLA and to make the PSERS system more fully funded. There is money available to help those who helped PA communities throughout their careers and beyond. We have senior educators living in poverty. If not now, when?

Though COLAs have never been guaranteed, the PA General Assembly regularly passed COLA legislation every 4-6 years, thereby creating a tacit agreement that periodic COLAs would be awarded to annuitants.

There is an educator shortage in PA that continues to worsen. Showing that educators are valued will make education a more attractive field for the young and may keep current educators in the workforce. Not providing a COLA for decades sends the opposite message, that educators are not valued and that the commitment to a career in education will not allow you to live with dignity in retirement.

PASR RECREO DAY TRIPS SPRING, 2024

Family & friends are always welcome

Plan to join us for great trips.

Caroline Fedena
RECREO Chair.



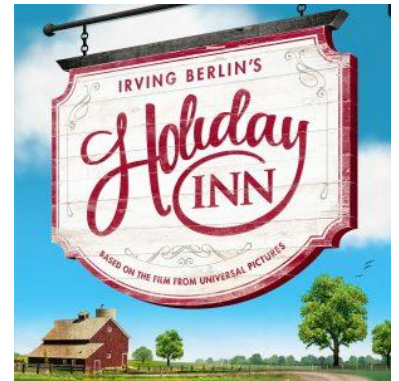
Please consider joining us at one or more of the following offerings. We have a great season planned



NEMOURS ESTATE -- Thursday, Nov. 21, 10 AM -4:30 PM, \$21 per person. Self-guided tour of "America's Versailles," Christmas display. Tour dazzling, festive displays inside the 77-room mansion, the chauffeur's garage, and select areas of the gardens. Join us for lunch at the DuPont Country Club (Not Included)

Irving Berlin's "**HOLIDAY INN**" -- **Wednesday, December 4, 11 AM, \$70.50 per person.** **Dinner Theater, Wilmington, DE.** A

Connecticut farmhouse is transformed into an inn featuring shows to celebrate each holiday from Thanksgiving to the Fourth of July. Inspired by the Academy Award-winning film of the same name, "**Holiday Inn**" is a story of romance with a mix of small-town living, bright lights, and the lure of stardom. This joyous musical features thrilling dance numbers, laugh-out-loud comedy, and nearly two dozen Irving Berlin classics with a book by Gordon Greenberg and Chad Hodge. This year-round romance is sure to delight! Enjoy a full dinner before the show.



Philadelphia Orchestra "**GLORIOUS SOUNDS OF CHRISTMAS,**" **Sunday, December 15, 2:00 PM** Kimmel Center. (Price to be determined). You can almost hear the stamping of the reindeer hooves on the roof in these concerts, beloved by fans since the iconic "**Glorious Sound of Christmas**" recording with Eugene Ormandy and the Orchestra was released in 1962. One of Your Philadelphia Orchestra's favorite guest conductors—and a favorite with orchestras around the world—William Eddins returns to lead this rousing celebration. Arrive early! Enjoy a holiday recital featuring students in our School Ensemble Program at KIPP West Philadelphia Preparatory Charter School. The performance is in Commonwealth Plaza and is FREE for all to attend!

RECREO REGISTRATION FORM

For more information, contact Caroline Fedena: c_fedena@yahoo.com or 484-574-0784

Please make checks payable to: DELAWARE COUNTY PASR

Mail To: CAROLINE FEDENA, 184 SUNSET VIEW DRIVE, GLEN MILLS, PA 19342

I am interested in the following trip(s) (Please indicate how many tickets you are purchasing.)

Nemours Estate -- \$21

Phiula. Orchestra -- \$TBD

Holiday Inn -- \$70.50

NAME(S) _____ HOME PHONE _____

ADDRESS _____ CELL _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS _____ I can drive others in a carpool

(If you have a problem driving, we may be able to arrange transportation depending on where you live)



COMMUNITY SERVICE SURVEY

To ALL PASR MEMBERS – Thank you for being a volunteer in our community!

PASR Chapters are interested in documenting the hours of service that volunteer retirees contribute to their local communities. In doing this, our volunteers show the community at large a positive picture of the activities of public school retirees. Please take a moment to complete this form, filling in the appropriate number of hours PER YEAR that you volunteer. A summary of this information is shared with AARP, NRTA, and PASR Headquarters.

EDUCATIONAL **HRS/YR**

Historical Assn _____

Library _____

School Board _____

Other _____

Total _____

SOCIAL SERVICES

Boards/Committees _____

Cancer Society _____

Drug/Alcohol _____

Fire/Ambulance _____

Fraternal Groups _____

Hospital/Nursing Home _____

Meals on Wheels _____

Office of the Aging _____

Red Cross _____

Salvation Army _____

Service Organization _____

Soup Kitchen/Food Bank _____

Visitation/Nurturing _____

Other _____

Total _____

POLITICAL

Advocacy _____

Elections _____

Government _____

Other _____

Total _____

RELIGIOUS **HRS/YR**

Adult Instruction _____

Youth Instruction _____

Organization _____

Visitation _____

Other _____

Total _____

SERVICES TO YOUTH

Alliance to Youth _____

Classroom Volunteer _____

Head Start _____

Latch-Key Program _____

Literacy _____

Scholarships _____

School Volunteer _____

Sports _____

Tutoring _____

YMCA/YWCA _____

Other _____

Total _____

I have served in special leadership roles as follows:

Name _____

Total Hrs. / Year / All Categories _____ Chapter _____

Phone Number _____ Date _____ E-Mail _____

YES, I want my hours counted, and, **YES**, consider me for the **Volunteer of the Year Award**.

YES, I want my hours counted, but **DO NOT** consider me for the **Volunteer of the Year Award**.

RETURN THIS FORM TO Phyllis Simmons, 1108 Gateway Ave., Garnet Valley, PA 19060 by June 30, 2024

Please use a second sheet of paper to clarify or to provide a more detailed description of your involvement with and activities.

Pennsylvania Association of School Retirees
PASR -- Delaware County Chapter
c/o Susan Stevens, Membership
2955 Summit Circle
Aston, PA 19014-1624

Community Service Committee

Phyllis Simmons
Volunteerism Chair



As a retiree, there is now time to continue to use your talents to help others. It is now the period of reflection when thanks are given for the opportunities and resources that can be shared and utilized. The kids are grown, homes are paid and/or downsized, and there is no longer a required place to be during the day for 5 days a week. The question becomes: What can I do now? One answer is to volunteer. Benefits include strengthening ties to the community, making new connections and friends, and using your expertise. Organizations are always looking for volunteers.

Our PASR Chapter reports the community service hours submitted by our members to state organizations. The form, **Community Service Survey**, used to submit your volunteer hours is included in this newsletter. Please complete the form by filling in the number of hours (even small ones) volunteered from June 2023 to June 2024. The form is due **by June 30, 2024**. In addition to being included in the newsletter, the form can be found online at our chapter's website (www.delcopasr.org). Go to the drop-down list and then Community Service. We all need your help in continuing to serve and support one another.

“Life’s most persistent and urgent question is, what are you doing for others?”-Dr. Martin L. King, Jr.