



Volume 32 Issue1

THE ACASR LIGHTHOUSE

Newsletter of the

Allegheny County Association of School Retirees

A beacon to help light your way through retirement years



PASR Region 12

Allegheny County, PA

April 2025

President's Message

Dr. Ron Dufalla, ACASR President

I hope this message finds you well after a winter that was more challenging than those of the past several years. Since the beginning of meteorological spring on March 1, the weather has dramatically changed with more spring and summer like days that meet with my personal preferences.

It is fitting to begin this message by noting the passing of two individuals that provided significant assistance to ACASR. The first was Mark Krempa, Assistant Executive Director at PASR. Mark passed away in early December. Whenever our chapter had questions or concerns related to our relationship with PASR and/or the operation of ACASR, Mark was always prompt at providing the help that we needed. The staff of PASR has done an excellent job of picking up Mark's duties and responsibilities during the interim until a new Assistant Executive Director is secured. The second was Joseph Poerio, Region 12 treasurer who passed away in January. Joe was meticulous in his duties as treasurer of Region 12 composed of both the ACASR and PghASR chapters. He efficiently administered the Education Support grant that our chapter receives every other year. Both Mark and Joe are deeply missed.

As noted in previous messages, I am a member of the PASR Chapter Outreach Committee. One of our duties is to promote membership in both PASR and its various chapters throughout the state. With that being said, I hope you will find time in your schedules to attend the next Region 12 luncheon to be held at the LeMont Restaurant on Thursday, May 1, 2025. A luncheon reservation form is included with this newsletter. If you have not attended a Region 12 luncheon in the past, please consider doing so and bringing a friend. It is an excellent opportunity to socialize with fellow retirees from both ACASR and PghASR.

Some school retirees may want to learn more about ACASR before becoming a member. There is a standing invitation for all current and prospective members to attend any ACASR Board meeting. The ACASR Board meets four times a year in January, April, July, and October. The remaining meetings for 2025 are scheduled for April 10, July 10, and October 9 at 10:00 AM. All meetings are held at the Allegheny Intermediate Unit #3 at the Waterfront in Homestead, Pennsylvania. Please join the ACASR Board at its next meeting.

If I can be of assistance or service to you, please reach out to me whenever you feel the need at either (412) 673-3392, (412) 445-5821, or drrondufallamc@comcast.net. Thank you for allowing me to serve you, the members of ACASR.

DATES TO REMEMBER

Please put these dates on your calendar now!

ALL MEMBERS are cordially invited to attend any or all events,

April 10, 2025 10:00 am

ACASR Board Meeting
AIU Waterfront, Dewey Room

Thursday, May 1, 2025 11:00 am

PASR Region 12 Spring Luncheon
LeMont Restaurant
(See reservation form)

May 17-23

PASR State RECREO TRIP
Kentucky Bourbon and Horses
see www.pasr.org

Tuesday, May 20, 2025

1:00 p.m.-3:00p.m.
Community Service with PghASR at
Greater Pgh Area Community Food Bank.
RSVP to ggetty700w@aol.com

Wednesday, June 11, 2025 12:35 p.m.

Pirates v Marlins Baseball Game,
PNC Park RSVP due by April 19.
See reservation form

July 10, 2025 10:00 a.m.

ACASR Board Meeting AIU
Waterfront, Rogers Room

Friday, July 11, 2025 11:00 a.m.

Lunch Bunch @ Narcissi
Winery RSVP by Monday, July 7 to
Glory Getty at ggetty700w@aol.com

August TBD

Batch Pack
at Batch Foundation

Thursday, Sept 18, 2025 11:00 am

PASR Region 12 Fall Luncheon
Edgewood Country Club

Oct 5-7

PASR House of Delegates
State College, PA

October 9, 2025 10:00 a.m.

ACASR Board Meeting AIU Waterfront,
Rogers Room

December TBD Batch a Toy
at Batch Foundation

Website

Our website is usually updated with photos, recent obituaries and legislative news when the newsletter comes out. We are running out of free space so some older articles may be deleted. This site is worth looking at and sending to friends to encourage them to join. Comments and suggestions are always welcome. <https://thepasr.wixsite.com/allegHENYPASR>

PASR REGION 12 Spring Luncheon

Host: Pittsburgh Chapter

Thursday, May 1, 2025

\$45.00

(Includes tax and gratuity)

LeMont Restaurant

1114 Grandview Avenue, Mount Washington, Pittsburgh, PA 15211
412-431-3100

11:00, Meet and Greet

11:30-12:00, Region 12 Meeting

12:00, Lunch, followed by Guest Speaker

Guest Speaker: Cyndie Carioli, Senior Justice Advocate for Allegheny County District Attorney's Office speaking about Red Flags - Learn How To Avoid Becoming a Victim of Scamming & Fraud

Menu (Choose One Entrée)

Vegetable Strudel

Chicken Marsala

Atlantic Salmon

Veal Parmesan

Salad, rolls, beverage, Pecan Ball

Valet parking is \$9.00.

Street parking is available.

PASR REGION 12 SPRING LUNCHEON RESERVATION FORM

Reservations are requested no later than Friday, April 25, 2025. Make checks payable to PghASR and mail with this form to Eileen Gavin, 1120 Fairfield St., Pittsburgh, PA 15201. Any questions, please call 412-496-5241.

Due to our commitment to the banquet facility, we will not be able to give refunds for cancellations.

____ Number of reservations for **Vegetable Strudel** = \$_____ Name of person(s) _____

____ Number of reservations for **Chicken Marsala** = \$_____ Name of person(s) _____

____ Number of reservations for **Atlantic Salmon** = \$_____ Name of person(s) _____

____ Number of reservations for **Veal Parmesan** = \$_____ Name of person(s) _____

Total enclosed: \$_____ @ **\$45 per person**

Name of person sending reservation _____

Address _____

Phone number _____ Email (Please print clearly) _____

NOTE: Photographs will be taken at this event. Some photos might be published in PghASR Newsletters. If you do NOT want your picture to appear in the newsletter, please opt out by putting a check mark here. _____



Information about the Guest Speaker for the Region 12 Spring Luncheon scheduled for Thursday, May 1st at the LeMont Restaurant.

The Guest Speaker will be Cyndie Carioli a Senior Justice Advocate for the Allegheny County District Attorney's Office. Ms. Carioli is an experienced and trained professional working with and addressing the particular needs of older adults throughout Allegheny County. Collaborating with senior service providers and law enforcement, she works to promote awareness of elder abuse and supports senior victims of fraud, abuse and neglect. Ms. Carioli has been working with and advocating for seniors for nearly two decades. She has been a Senior Center Director, has been nationally certified as an Information & Referral Specialist in senior services and is passionate about protecting older adults from abuse. Cyndie's topic for the luncheon specifically will be, "RED FLAGS – Learn How to Avoid Becoming a Victim of Scamming & Fraud". Older adults in Allegheny County have become targets for scamming, fraud and abuse. Ms. Carioli's presentation will summarize the reasons for this trend and detail the kinds of elder abuses the Allegheny County District Attorney's Office has investigated, prosecuted and is working to prevent. You will receive information about what is being done behind the scenes to support older adults who have come through the system as well as what we ALL can do to prevent further abuses to our aging population. You will hear about the latest scams and how to avoid them. Questions and comments will be encouraged.

Educational Support

This is our year to give a \$500 scholarship to a graduating senior from any high school in our 42 school districts that is planning to major in education. Our Ed Support team of Rita and Laurel will be sending the application form to guidance counselors via the Allegheny Intermediate Unit and the Allegheny County Counselors Association. If you know of a potential senior with education in mind, ask them to request the application from their guidance counselor. Rita and Laurel will review submitted applications and make a decision in early summer. The recipient will be named in the August newsletter.

If you would like to help out with this worthy cause, please send a donation to our treasurer, Ron Dufalla, at 3413 Liberty Way, McKeesport, PA 15133.

Important COLA Update

On the next pages are two articles pertaining to legislation that is just being introduced in the General Assembly. The first is by Robert Marko, Region 12 Director and LPEC liaison. The second is from Kristen Holjes, Executive Director of PASR. Please note there is an invitation to a Zoom meeting on April 9 at the end of the second article.

Legislative News

Robert Marko, PASR Region 12 Director

During the PASR-L/PEC meeting on Wednesday, February 19, 2025 we were informed that Allegheny County State Representative Dan Deasy will again sponsor a new bill in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives for a Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for public school employees who retired from service prior to 2000. This bill will have a new number because it is a new legislative year. We will be asking all PASR members and friends to contact their Legislators and request support for this new legislation. We are also working to have this legislation become part of the 2025 Pennsylvania state budget. Please note that as of January 31, 2025 pre Act 9 retirees now need \$176.58 to purchase goods that would cost \$100.00 on July 1, 2002, the last effective date of the previous COLA paid to public school retirees who were employed in Pennsylvania. I hope that each of you will give some time to communicate and meet with your member of the Pennsylvania House of Representative and your state Senator to discuss the desperate need for a COLA for our elderly public school retirees. Please remember that the PASR legislative team members were able to get the Pennsylvania State House of Representatives to pass COLA Bill H. B. 1416 in 2024, but the chairman of the State Senate would not release it from the State Senate Government Committee to be voted on. We need to make sure that the new house bill is passed in the House of Representatives and then work to get the bill passed in the State Senate. Please call me at 724-687-0210 if you have any questions. We need your help to get the new COLA bill passed. Please consider giving your time to help pass this important legislation!

Spring 2025 COLA UPDATE from PASR

Efforts to promote lawmakers to adopt a COLA for pre-Act 9 beneficiaries continue in Harrisburg. House members Rep. Steven Malagari and Rep. Dan Deasy have again introduced legislation to support retired school employees. The bill – House Bill 411 – is now in the House State Government Committee awaiting consideration. The legislation mirrors the proposal led by these two lawmakers last session, which passed the state House twice with significant bipartisan support. As we all know, no action was taken in the state Senate. PASR and its lobbying team at Triad Strategies are continuing to work with lawmakers to advance this bill. These efforts are also being supported by groups like PSEA and AFSCME. All parties continue to stress the imperative nature of the COLA. With inflation continuing to rise, pre-Act 9 PSERS beneficiaries are seeing the values of their pensions decline with each passing day. PASR and Triad are actively working on a new “fact sheet” for advocacy distribution to lawmakers to help encourage their support. That material will be made available in the near future. Outreach efforts on the COLA are continuing in the state Senate, especially with members who have outwardly expressed their support of the concept. Sen. Katie Muth and Sen.

John Kane have again issued legislative co-sponsor memos with plans to introduce COLA bills similar to those they sponsored last session. It will remain imperative for PASR members and retirees to reach out to their local elected officials and advocate for advancement of the COLA plan(s). Two decades are far too long to wait for this support. If there are any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact the PASR team. We are here to help and continue the momentum we generated on this matter last session.

Sincerely,
Kristen Holjes, PASR Executive Director

P.S. We are excited to invite you to a Zoom presentation hosted by the Pennsylvania Association of School Retirees (PASR) on Wednesday, April 9, 2025, at 4:00 PM. This informative session will provide an overview of the group insurance plans offered by PASR, along with exclusive discounts and benefits designed to help our members save both time and money. It's essential to know that many health plans, including most Medicare plans, do not cover vision and dental insurance. This presentation will guide you through our various coverage options and demonstrate how a PASR membership pays for itself— especially with the 4-5% discounts available on home and auto insurance policies. Don't miss this opportunity to inform yourself about the benefits that could enhance your retirement life!

Go to our website pasr.org for more information.

Community service Christmas at Charlie's

On December 11, a group of volunteers from our chapter and PghASR went to the Batch Foundation in Munhall to wrap some of the thousands of items that had been donated for Christmas delivery. The huge gym was crammed with games, puzzles, books, sporting equipment, artist supplies, as well as home goods such as pots and pans, bedding, towels, kitchen tools and blankets. Everything was sorted into age groups and sometimes gender. Tables in the back were set up with baskets of tape, tags, markers and ribbons. Many large boxes were around with rolls and rolls of wrapping paper with dozens of holiday designs. We worked in small groups and were given a card with family members' names and proceeded to select gifts appropriate for each person on our list. At our intro to the morning, we were tasked with meeting new friends. What a great idea. I went to several tables and introduced myself and talked with that group.



It was fun. Charlie Batch always shows up to show his gratitude and to chat with each group and pose for pictures. All of the wrapped presents are delivered on Christmas Eve to the delight of over 400 families. This volunteering activity is a most rewarding time. See photos here and on our website. Community Service



PghASR has arranged a volunteer activity with the Food Bank on May 20, 2025 from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. All volunteers need to register at least ten days in advance so that plans can be made appropriately and ensure that everyone has signed safety waivers before arriving. Please arrive ten minutes early.

Location: Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank

Address: 1 N Linden St, Duquesne, PA 15110

Parking: Park in front lot or along Grant Ave. and proceed to main entrance

Activity: Volunteer Engagement Center -- Packing boxes of shelf-stable items

Requirements: Closed-toe shoes are required. Volunteers must be at least 12 years old to participate and minors must be accompanied by an adult. Please bring additional layers of clothing as many of our projects take place in The Cool Zone, a 55°F temperature-controlled area that helps us process fresh produce.

Sign Up Link – (copy and paste)

<https://pittsburghfoodbank.my.site.com/volunteer/volunteer-registration/?ID=a0TRo00000WDzeTMAT>

or contact Glory Getty at ggetty700w@aol.com

RECREO

Here are some great opportunities to gather with friends and laugh.

Take Me Out To The Ball Game

Debra S. Rucki

How about joining some of your PPS retired colleagues on Wednesday, June 11h at 12:35 PM at PNC Park to watch the Pittsburgh Pirates vs Miami Marlins? The Pirates are willing to provide us with a block of tickets located on the 1st floor between the left field line and 3rd baseline near the top rows that are covered by the overhang. I'm trying to minimize the number of steps people would need to negotiate in order to access their seats. Usually these 1st floor seats sell for \$50.00 per seat. However, as a **group of Senior Citizens, 55 years and older**, the Pirates are willing to sell these seats at a cost of **\$30 plus each person will be provided with a \$5 voucher to use at any of the concession stands**. Yes, the Pirates cut the refreshment voucher from \$10 to \$5! Please note that the game we will be attending is June 11th! I would like to purchase seats as soon as possible. If you would like to join me at PNC Park, please complete the form below and **mail your \$30.00 check payable to Debra Rucki by Saturday, April 19th**. I will distribute tickets on Thursday, May 1st at the Region 12 Luncheon at the LeMont. If you are unable to attend the LeMont Luncheon, I will meet you at the Willie Stargell Statue, which is across the 6th Street Bridge on Federal Street on game day. Please pick your ticket(s) up between 11:45 a.m. and no later than 12:15 p.m. on game day. Let's Go BUCS!!!

Take Me Out To The Ball Game

Pittsburgh Pirates vs Miami Marlins at 12:35 p.m.

When: Wednesday, June 11th, 2025

Where: PNC Park

Tickets distributed at the the May 1st at the Region 12 Luncheon at the LeMont or at the Willie Stargell Statue on Federal Street between 11:45 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. on game day.

Cost: \$30 per ticket for **Senior Citizens 55 years and older** + \$5.00 for concession stands.

Checks are payable to: **Debra Rucki** Mail to: **1416 Harris Ave. Pittsburgh, PA 15205**

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Number of Tickets: _____ Amount Remitted: _____

Narcissi Winery

Join us for lunch at delightful Narcissi winery in Gibsonia on Friday, July 11, 2025 at 11:00 a.m. Check out their website for menu and directions. <https://www.narcisiwinery.com/>. RSVP to Glory Getty at ggetty700w@aol.com by Monday, July 7th.

State Trips

The state organization has two trips planned for 2025. On May 17-23, there is a bus trip planned for "Kentucky Bourbon and Horses". A bus will pick up in Monroeville. Then on October 19-28, a trip is planned with Avalon cruises from Paris to Normandy. All details and reservation info is on PASR's home page <https://www.pasr.org/>.

Luncheons

Don't forget our tasty Spring and Fall Luncheons at LeMont and Edgewood Country

Social Services

This past holiday season, our social services sent holiday cards to all emeriti members. This was appreciated as we heard back from several members. We would like to keep in touch with members who are in a nursing facility or are at home alone and would like a note of cheer. If you know of someone who is lonely or ill or depressed, please let us know so that we may reach out to them. Contact ddado@comcast.net or call 412.751.2045.

Membership Notes

It seems like this message is a broken record. However, we feel it is vital that our members understand our chapter's unique position in the state. We are the only chapter that includes 42 school districts. That is huge. Most chapters include five or six school districts, making it much easier to reach out and contact recent retirees. Our membership is made up of mostly Life and Emeriti members. Emeriti members are those that have reached the age of 80. Those members no longer have to pay dues. In order for us to know that, we need a date of birth for members. This is requested when initially joining. However, some people choose not to include that information. Also requested is an email address. This is so that we may send you your newsletter or other alerts digitally. WE DO NOT SHARE YOUR INFORMATION WITH ANY PARTY. Included here is a membership form for 2025-2026 dues. Our dues follow our fiscal year of July 1 to June 30. If you joined our chapter in October or even January, your dues for the following year are due to our treasurer by July 1. Because our treasury is small, we appreciate you maintaining your membership and supporting our chapter. Feel free to forward this newsletter to any retirees that you know. Another way to reach out is to email our website to your friends. <https://thepasr.wixsite.com/>

ASASR 2025/2026 Membership Dues Renewal Form

Enclosed is my check for \$25 for 2025/2026 Dues

Title (circle) Dr. Mrs. Ms. Miss. Mr. Name _____

Address _____

City/ State/ Zip _____

Telephone _____ Retirement Date _____ School District _____

Email Address (Please print legibly) _____

Make your checks payable to ACASR and mail it with this form to

Ron Dufalla 3413 Liberty Way, McKeesport PA 15133

ACASR Board Directory

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Past President	Donna Dado
MB&S Chair	Ron Dufalla
Treasurer	Ron Dufalla
Bylaws & Nominating	Jack McCurry
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Working energetically for your better retirement!

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