

# THE BUCKS MONT BUZZ

Bucks MONT Chapter PASR

SPRING 2023 Newsletter

[www.pasr.org](http://www.pasr.org)

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## COMBINATION BUCKS AND MONTGOMERY COUNTY EDITION

Thanks to Eileen Sichel for the new name of our newsletter

### PRESIDENTS' MESSAGE



It is time for our combined Bucks and Montgomery Spring Luncheon. Please plan on attending. In addition to a fun entertainer and lunch we have important business to conduct. In preparation for the merger of the Bucks chapter and the Montgomery chapter of PASR we will provide copies of our revised bylaws for your perusal. In addition, we plan to award scholarships and a teacher grant. The location for the luncheon is The William Penn Inn in Gwynedd. Our fall luncheon will be held at Spring Mill Manor in Ivyland.

We are all disappointed in the failure to acquire a COLA. PASR continues to work toward this goal. You can help. Visit <https://www.pasr.org/legislative-cola-information/> for instructions on how to contact your state representative.

If you are a state member you may be interested in a scheduled PASR Benefit Zoom Presentation on May 17th, 2023 at 6:00pm. You need to register by May 3rd, 2023 at <https://www.pasr.org/meeting-registration>

Our chapter made a donation to help honor Mark McKillop who passed away last July. Mark is the past Executive Director of PASR. A memorial bench is being constructed to be placed outside PASR Headquarters in Mechanicsburg.

Please invite your retired school co-workers to join PASR <https://www.buckspasr.org/membership> We are always looking for people willing to serve on the board. Please contact any of the chairs listed with their articles if you are interested in serving on their committee.

*Arlene, Evie, and John*

### SPRING LUNCHEON – May 4

Luncheon will be held at the William Penn Inn,

### PLEASE NOTE NEW SCHEDULE

10:30 – 10:50 Registration and Socialization

11:00 – 12:00 Business Meeting & Scholarships & Grant Presentations

12:00 – 1:15 Luncheon

1:15 – 2:00 Program – Wonder of Elvis

**SPRING LUNCHEON – MAY 4**  
**William Penn Inn – Banquet Entrance**  
**Route 202 & Sumneytown Pike – 1017 DeKalb Pike, Gwynedd, PA**  
**Please reserve by April 25 and choose entrée using insert coupon.**

**Entrée Choices – Cost \$31**

- **Chicken Marsala with mushrooms in a Marsala wine sauce**
- **Crispy Parmesan Panko Crusted Lemon Sole with lemon caper butter sauce**

All entrees include a House salad with creamy Tarragon Dressing, Buttermilk Mashed Potatoes, and Julienne Vegetable Medley. Dessert – Fresh Fruit Cobbler  
Coffee, Tea, and Iced Tea

**Program – “Wonder of Elvis” – Elvis Pretzel**

John Ekey has been singing all his life. But, he actually only found his voice in the '90s. Whether he’s crooning romantic ballads, or belting out upbeat rockers, that voice sounds an awful lot like the King, Elvis Presley that is.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

The PASR Board of Directors named Kristen Hjoles as executive director, replacing the late Mark McKillop. She spoke at the Region 1 meeting in May and has assumed the leadership position. Mark Krempa has taken over the legislative responsibilities. Pictured on right are David Noyes, Region Director, and Kristen.



**EDUCATION SUPPORT**

**Co-Chairs**

Linda Peters

John Worthington

Scholarship information and applications were sent to all Bucks County Public High Schools. The deadline for these is April 15. Two \$1500 scholarships are awarded, one to the northern districts, one to the southern districts. The Loretta Woodson information was sent to the Morrisville Borough School District and the Grant information to the Neshaminy School District. We award a \$500.00 grant.

Montgomery County will be offering two \$1500 scholarships. We are currently working with the guidance staff at Hatboro-Horsham High School who will select two students who will be pursuing a college program in the field of Education.

A coupon for donations to these scholarships is included on coupon page.

## RECREO

Lynn Majewski



Join us for TEA at **The Village Teahouse**, 1919 West Point Pike, West Point, PA 19486 on June 15, at 11 AM. We will be having the Katherine's Tea that includes fresh scone with toppings, assorted tea sandwiches, assorted petite sweets, and tea. The cost is **\$38 per person**. Complete the coupon and make check payable to PASR / BCC. Payment due by 6/1/2023

## SOCIAL SERVICE/MEMORIAL HONOR FUND

Eileen Sichel, Chairperson

As more and more of our older members are asking for help, there has never been a more important time to donate to the SSSMHF. No funding comes from dues but relies only on the generosity of members or chapters. The fund helps PASR members from across the state that are experiencing financial difficulties and/or in need of support due to illness or age. Now that it is possible to visit those in need, we are happy to stop in to visit our shut-in members.

**A coupon can be found in this newsletter to be used to make a contribution.** To donate on line, go to [pasr.org/member-donate-ssmhf](http://pasr.org/member-donate-ssmhf) (member login required). Donations can be made to honor or memorialize someone who has made a difference in your life or to honor a special event such as a birthday or anniversary.

Keep our committee informed. If you are **celebrating a 90 or 90+** birthday or know of a member who is, let us know so that we can celebrate those special people at one of our luncheons. **Nonagenarians are welcome as guests to any of our luncheons, free of charge.** Just let us know your status on the attached luncheon coupon. As always, remember to let Eileen know if you have information or questions about members in need of our support. **If you are in need of a ride to our luncheon, please contact Eileen and she will try to get you there.** You are our only source of information concerning those members who could use a helping hand, financially or otherwise.

## COLA

Although Governor Shapiro made no mention of a COLA in his Budget address, members of the General Assembly and Senate are looking for cosponsors for their legislation. PASR, PSEA-R, and the new annuitant Representative on PSERS, Sue Lemmo, have expressed their desire to secure a COLA this year. To assist in this endeavor, PASR is asking you to contact your Representative in the General Assembly and State Senator. If you need to find contact information, go to [www.pa.gov](http://www.pa.gov) and click government and go to House or Senate information or the link in the Presidents' Message.'

The Following is a sample letter that you can tailor to your situation. You can make an appointment and hand deliver it to the local office of your representative or senator, or email it to him. The more pressure we can exert will gain the attention of these members. Additional information can be found on the PASR website, address in masthead of the newsletter and link in the President's Message.

As a senior citizen who spent \*\*\*\* years working in public education, I hoped for financial comfort in retirement. Sadly, that's not the case. Inflation is spiking and the cost-of-goods continues to cut deeper into our pockets. Yet, the General Assembly failed to address the needs of people like me in the 2022 budget process

despite funds being available. I could not be more disappointed in the lack of action taken by the General Assembly to help those who have helped their communities and Pennsylvania for decades in their careers.

The case for passing a COLA to help those who retired before the passage of Act 9 of 2001 is overwhelming. It is especially urgent for those who retired before 1990. Pre-Act 9 (those who retired prior to July 1, 2001) annuitants/retirees prior comprise only 20.9% of all retirees collecting a pension from PSERS. That is 47,435 out of 226,683 total annuitants. The Post-Act 9 annuitants outnumber the Pre-Act 9 annuitants 4.78 to 1. The data is complete as of July 1, 2021. In comparison, that number was 21.8% of the total with data complete as of January 1, 2021. Sample letter to use when communicating via mail or email with your legislators is below, but please MAKE IT YOUR OWN as legislators place more weight on unique communications as opposed to form letters. If you can illustrate the need through personal stories about financial hardship, please add that to your communications. Please also consider drafting an editorial to send to your local news outlets as well!

Many retired educators and school employees living in their 70s and 80s are faced with the reality that pensions earned during their decades of public service are now barely enough to make ends meet. For some of us it is not enough to make ends meet. There has not been a COLA for pension annuitants in over 20 years!! While cost-of-living adjustments and expanded income eligibilities are commonplace in Social Security and the state's PACE/PACENET program, talks of COLAs for pension recipients are often ignored. The last COLA for retired school employees occurred in 2001. Since then, inflation rates have risen by more than 50 percent, cutting the buying power of pension benefits in half. State lawmakers often stress the importance of addressing the unique needs of Pennsylvania's senior population and supporting a COLA would be a significant step. Fiscal responsibility is important for retirees. We understand the need to think long-term and budget for the future. We do it every day. But with state tax dollars billions above estimates this year and federal dollars further buoying the state coffers, we also must face the reality that Pennsylvania should finally be able to responsibly support retired school employees. Budget related decisions are never easy. We respect that, but Pennsylvania is now in the best position in more than a decade to support thousands of retired school employees. Twenty-one years of no action has been capped off this year with great disappointment. Please don't let the year end without supporting a COLA for retired PA employees who continue to make great contributions to the Commonwealth. I know that my vote for you is dependent upon your favorable view and vote in favor of a COLA for retired educators, and that I will encourage my friends and family to do likewise.

(If you would like a copy of this letter emailed to you, please use Judy Guise's email in Masthead)

## **MEMBER BENEFITS**

**Meg Kramer**

Our newest state member benefit is Elder law attorney, Jessica Fisher Green. PASR members are offered free consultations and a discount for the services she provides. Attorney Greene had been selected for the 2020 Pennsylvania Rising Starts list. Each year, no more that 2.5% of the lawyers in the state are selected to receive this honor.

Earlier this year Attorney Greene presented a winter educational webinar on "Estate Planning & Beyond" during which she covered all aspects of planning your estate---wills, trusts, financial power of attorney, durable financial power of attorney, health care power of attorney, living wills, spousal trusts, and taxes. To see this presentation, go to <https://youtu.be/Nn-TIQs8QFQ>) or sign in to PASR.org for Educational Zooms.

**BUCKS COUNTY CHAPTER PASR**  
**728 Juniper Street**  
**Quakertown, PA 18951-1510**

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**DATES TO REMEMBER**

<b>MAY 4</b>	<b>BUCKS MONT CHAPTER LUNCHEON MEETING</b>
<b>MAY 16</b>	<b>PRIM ARY ELECTION</b>
<b>MAY 19</b>	<b>REGION 1 LUNCHEON</b>
<b>JUNE 2</b>	<b>BUCKS MONT CHAPTER EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING</b>
<b>OCTOBER 12</b>	<b>BUCKS MONT CHAPTER FALL LUNCHEON</b>
<b>OCTOBER 15 -17</b>	<b>SPRING MILL MANOR, IVYLAND PASR HOUSE OF DELEGATES MEETING Doubletree Hotel, Cranberry, PA</b>