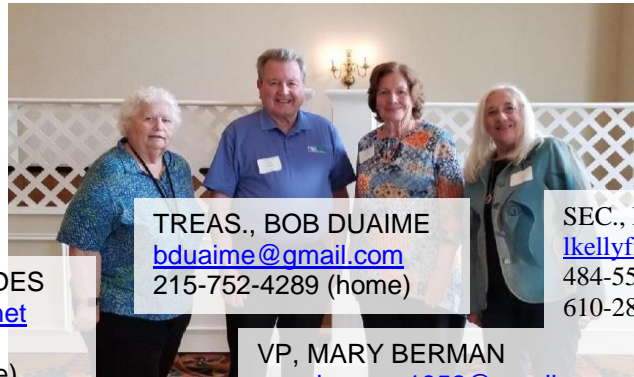


A newsletter for PSEA ME Region Retired members. Now available electronically in members emails.

BUCKS COUNTY PSEA RETIRED OFFICERS



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

These past years have been very challenging. I don't know about you, but I'm ready to get out of the house and live my life to the fullest. As soon as the weather cools down, of course.

Things are looking up on the education front. A monumental budget increase for education was passed by the General Assembly and signed by Governor Wolf. It includes more than \$1 billion in state funding increases for public schools. In the wake of the Covid Crisis and the horrendous school shootings, the Assembly budgeted \$100 million in school safety and security grants and \$100 million in Mental Health grants.

The General Assembly did not act on a COLA for pre-Act 9 annuitants. (That's for the people who do not receive the 2.5 multiplier). PSEA has been working diligently to accomplish a COLA for that group. All is not lost, however. There is a chance that it might still happen. Soon we are instituting a letter writing campaign to encourage our legislators to pass the COLA. The oldest annuitant is 107 years old. I cannot imagine how much of a pension she is receiving each month. I do know salaries in the 70's was very minimal.

Our pension remains solid. PSERS announced strong investment returns for the quarter ending March 31. They ranked number one among the 65-fund public plan peer group of all plans greater than \$1 billion tracked by the Board of Trustees investment consulting firm. The war in the Ukraine, the rise of gas prices and inflation might have an effect on the next quarter's ranking. The fact remains, our pension plan is still solid.

There was a change in the dues structure. Our ESP (Education Support Professionals) membership dues were reduced. Prior to the new school year, ESP members paid the same dues as other retirees. Now, their annual dues for this year will be \$48. Life memberships will be \$509. Dues for EA members are \$73 annual dues and \$798 for life members. This change was accomplished by PSEA-Retired. The dues' structure was altered on the national as well as the state level through new business items we brought forth. The change reflects the fact that pension amounts are less for ESP members than EA members.

Speaking of membership. PSEA-Retired received an NEA award for membership at the retired portion of the Representative Assembly. The award was for recruitment of new members. We are at the forefront of representing retirees and making our voices heard. We all know there is strength in numbers. Please encourage your friends to join us if they aren't members. Joining is very easy. Just have them go to PSEA.ORG and click on PSEA -Retired. They will be guided through the process. Actually, the benefits of membership will more than pay for the amount of dues.

In another dues related subject, I hope to see you at our combined Bucks and Montgomery County luncheon. Please note the greatly reduced price of \$10. This is a one time only deal! (It's almost a free lunch!) The reason for such a bargain is two fold. 1. It's been a long time since we've seen each other. Hopefully it will entice you to reconnect with friends you haven't seen in a while. 2. We have a healthy treasury since very few activities occurred during the Covid crisis. This is our way of giving back to our members.

A big election will take place in November. I encourage you to vote your pension, health benefits and Social Security. Remember you spent our life educating and protecting youths. Think of them when you cast your ballot.

Happy Trails
Dixie

SPEAKER AT APRIL MEETING

Did you know that not all ice cream is really ice cream?

[Mary Bach PSEA Bio](#)

Mary Bach, Consumer Advocate Independent and chair of the Pennsylvania Consumer Issues Task Force AARP, a former high school teacher from Murraysville, PA was a presenter at our April Meeting. Mary



provided the group with a tremendous amount of consumer advice and information that helps us spend our pennies with the knowledge needed to get what you pay for in addition to what exactly is taxable and not taxable in PA. Her sense of humor had us all paying attention as we laughed through the valuable lessons she gave.

You can find videos of her on the web easily by just searching Mary Bach, consumer advocate.

She actually sued WalMart for two cents! Not once, but many times and won! She was an absolute joy to have for our members. Check her out on Twitter

@MBachadvocate.

THANK YOU DIANA MARTINEZ!

For all the years you volunteered to get the Buck Tales newsletter to the Bucks County Retired PSEA members, thank you! The many hours of collecting, coordinating, gathering, composing and getting all off to be printed and distributed in timely fashion is greatly appreciated. Passing the baton isn't an easy decision to make when, as you have shown, commitment and passion to deliver has been obvious. You can take a break now and sit back and truly enjoy retirement! Thank you, Diana, from all the members of Bucks County PSEA Retired. See you at our next meeting!



EUROPE FROM A TO B By Dave Droppa

This is the way to travel!! A beautifully appointed riverboat - with all the modern amenities, a panoramic deck, outstanding service, and delicious cuisine - became our home for seven days in April 2022 when our group of 36 PSEA-Retired members and friends cruised from Amsterdam, Netherlands to Bruges, Belgium (A to B) for fun and adventure. Daily excursions ashore immersed us in local culture and history. Evening sailings gave us time to relax and prepare for our next day of excitement.



see Spring tourist destination!

Our canal tour of Amsterdam with a stop at the mid-city markets gave us a wonderful view of the waterways, unique Dutch buildings, bike paths, and houseboats. Amsterdam even has multi-storied "car garages" just for bicycles. Watch out!! Bicyclists have the right of way - not pedestrians! Off to the world-famous Keukenhof Gardens for hours of breath-taking beauty amidst the millions of tulips, daffodils, and Spring flowers. Everywhere you turned there was another dazzling display of color. Even though the day was windy and spritzed with rain, this was a fantastic overload of sensory delights with acres and acres of every imaginable color of the rainbow planted for our enjoyment. This is definitely a must-

Our side trip to a local cheese shop gave us the opportunity to observe the making of cheese as well as the tasting of a variety of homemade goodies. Yum! A day without cheese is ... just nonsense!

The riverboat sailed and sailed. Most nights and days we went through locks in the waterways. Fascinating! At one of the next stops many of us opted for a tour of the Kroller Muller Museum of Masters and Modern Art. Van Gogh was the highlight at the site. Here, there, and everywhere were Van Gogh masterpieces. Other artists had side rooms and rotating artists were displayed for showings. A wonderful sculpture garden of unusual and thought-provoking pieces filled acres of land surrounding the museum. Bring your walking shoes.

The Delta Works Project at Neeltje gave us another chance to stretch our legs and walk "miles and miles" to see an engineering wonder created to protect parts of Holland from flooding. Our tour guide was so proud of the marvelous work that went into designing and implementing this structure that he had us climbing ladders and ramps to access various observation points as he explained the details. The Dutch are so inventive and in-tune to their environment.

Veere was a quaint little town nearby with historic churches, homes, and shops with enticing merchandise. The local candy store made a quick fortune from tourists by selling old-fashioned candies from our childhood memories. Nougats, raspberries, licorice, gumdrops, and so much more were available. We just had to stop inside on the way back to the bus.

Many travelers went for the long walking tour of Ghent, Belgium with its rich heritage of medieval buildings and its belfry tower of 54 bells. St. Bravo Cathedral was a wealth of art treasures including works by Peter Paul Rubens and Hubert and Jan Van Eyck.

That afternoon we drove to Bruges. It was a 45-minute walk to the center of town from the bus stop. Many of us opted for the local taxis. Many more people used the taxis to return to the bus later in the day. The Bruges city plaza was filled with activity. Horse and carriage rides, a carnival, lots of cafes, souvenir stands, and ...best of all... chocolate shops! We found a local chocolatier with some of the fanciest and tastiest chocolates in Belgium. The hardest part was deciding whether to eat them on the riverboat or save them to share at home in the USA. Choices...Choices.



On our way back to Amsterdam we stopped in Antwerp, Belgium for a detailed visit to that delightful city, and then in Kinderdijk, Netherlands to finally have a close-up tour of Holland's famous working windmills. People actually live in the windmills and maintain them for the country. One windmill couple gave us an inside look at the cramped spaces and ingenious workings of these iconic wonders. The community no longer depends on these old windmills to regulate water flow for the nation, but it was nice to associate these structures with the history of the country. We all returned to the USA with many fond memories of chocolate, cheese, tulips, windmills, and even wooden shoes! Contact Dixie Rhodes for our next excursion. Everyone is invited. Now is the time to travel!!

*If you've enjoyed reading Dave's accounts of Retired travels in this article and would like more here is a link to the Costa Rica 2020 adventures! [COSTA RICA 2020](#)

NEA RA Chicago 2022

By Lynne Kelly



**Change, Motivation,
Action**

"Change is good!" How often does one hear that? Is there agreement with that statement? This year there were many changes at the RA (Representative Assembly). First, an elected delegate could participate in the hybrid model and do everything online. Out of five Mideastern retired delegates, only one participated in person. Additionally, only eighteen retired PA delegates participated in person. COVID precaution measures in place were seriously adhered to included wearing a mask at all times, unless eating and testing every three days with results registered on Return-Safe program. Voting occurred with a "button" on your phone. No voice votes or roll calls! Time was set aside for NBI's (New Business Items). NBI "makers" were encouraged to bundle items with other items in order to have discussion. Many makers did bundle their item so the topic would be debated.

President Sara Borgman dropped the gavel for NEA Retired with, "We are NEA Retired, and we are committed, our commitment continues. If you're not, why not? Are you signed up to get involved?"



What have you committed to do?" She reminded us of Jimmy Carter's philosophy. "If a person makes up their mind to do their best each day, they will succeed. Have members done their best? If not, why not? Winston Churchill believed the price of greatness is what you're willing to do. It is more important We received the award as the state with the largest increase of NEA Retired membership. The recognition is for 1,128 new members. Other states met calls, too. "Thank you for all you have done, all you do, and all you will do," encouraged NEA Vice President Princess Moss.

A traditional activity that did not change was special speakers with motivating speeches. First, President Joe Biden addressed delegates through video. He and Vice President Kamala Harris appreciate us and understand our needs. "We heard you about students falling behind cause of COVID, lead out of water, high speed internet, and we have more to do," Harris related. Other speakers included the Teacher of the Year, ESP of the Year, Higher Educator of the Year, the NEA Executive Director, the Governor of Illinois and many more. All presentations were memorable. The most unique were some cast members from Abbott Elementary. They recognize how hard teachers work. For more information about speakers and New Business Items, go to <https://www.nea.org/professional-excellence/conferences-events/annual-meeting-and-representative-assembly> The synopsis here is only part of an enriching NEA RA!

Political power is how we change. NEA members are called on to help save the freedoms we have. It is time... what is the verdict? Is change good?

To read Lynne's complete article please go to [RA FULL ARTICLE](#)

FALL LUNCHEON/MEETING

WHEN? WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 19TH

WHERE? WILLIAM PENN INN, 1017 DEKALB PIKE, GWYNEDD, PA 19436

LUNCH WILL BE SERVED AT NOON WITH A HOUSE SALAD AND YOUR CHOICE OF GLUTEN FREE CHICKEN MARSALA, CRAB CAKE OR VEGAN RIGATONI BOLOGNESE

KEY LIME PIE FOR DESERT AND CASH BAR

REGISTER BY COMPLETING THE ENCLOSED FORM AND MAIL TO:

BOB DUAIME 79 GOLF CLUB DR., LANGHORNE, PA 19047

COST \$10.00 MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO:

MIDEAST REGION PSEA RETIRED

Election of MER-Retired delegates to the PSEA Houses of Delegates

If you are a retired EA member (ESP has its own separate category) who wishes to have your name placed on the ballot to represent Mideastern Region Retired as a Bucks County Retired or Montgomery County Retired delegate to the PSEA Houses of Delegates, please forward your name and county of school district from which you retired to **Kenny Mckinney** either by email McKinney215@comcast.net or USPS to **2090 Palmer Ave., Bristol, PA 19007** to arrive **BEFORE October 5, 2022**. Please note that only email or USPS requests will be accepted – no phone calls. Those elected will serve for two school years beginning with the December 2022 PSEA HOD. Again, since ESP members have their own separate system within PSEA, only retired EA members are eligible to run for these positions.

As in the past, we will elect one delegate to represent each retired county and a third delegate to represent the retired region at large. The person who receives the most votes from each county will be declared a county delegate and the next person, regardless of county affiliation, will be declared an at-large region delegate. With the understanding that each county will be represented by at least one delegate, all other names on the ballot will serve as alternates in order of votes received.

However, please note that MER-Retired has forwarded a request for a fourth delegate (based on increased membership). If awarded, the two people who receive the most votes from each county will be declared elected. Alternates, again in order of votes received, will be assigned according to county, and should the list of same-county alternates be exhausted, an alternate may be assigned from the other county.

The election will take place at the MER-Retired luncheon and general membership meeting on Wednesday, October 19, 2022. Note that no nominations will be accepted from the floor.

PSEA MIDEAST REGION FALL LUNCHEON/MEETING



WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 19th

WILLIAM PENN INN

1017 DEKALB PIKE, GWYNEDD, PA 19146

LUNCH WILL BE SERVED AT NOON WITH A HOUSE SALAD AND YOUR CHOICE OF GLUTEN FREE CHICKEN MARSALA, CRAB CAKE OR VEGAN RIGATONI BOLOGNESE

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COMPLETING THE ENCLOSED FORM AND MAIL TO:

BOB DUAIME 79 GOLF CLUB DR., LANGHORNE, PA 19047

COST \$10.00 MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO MIDEAST REGION PSEA RETIRED

PLEASE MAIL YOUR REGISTRATION NO LATER THAN MONDAY, OCTOBER 10TH.

NAME: _____

CHOICE OF _____ GLUTEN FREE CHICKEN MARSALA
 _____ CRAB CAKE
 _____ VEGAN RIGATONI

ENCLOSE CHECK FOR \$10.00 MADE PAYABLE TO:
 MIDEAST REGION PSEA RETIRED

MAIL TO: BOB DUAIME
 79 GOLF CLUB DR.
 LANGHORNE, PA 19047