

PARA-phernalia

Your **P**ort **A**uthority **R**etirees **A**ssociation

Newsletter • Edition Number 37 • Spring 2007

A Message From Your President

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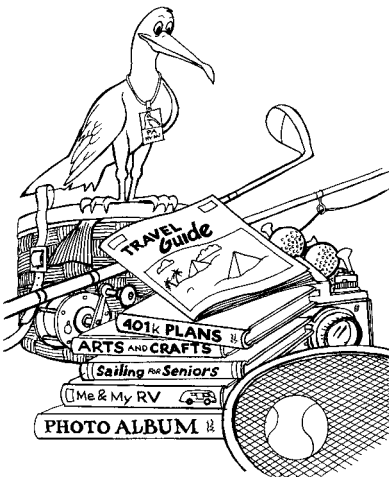
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*"We make a living by what
we get. We make a life by
what we give."*

*"Don't forget Where You Put
Your PARA-phernalia."*



A recent front page story in the New York Times titled, "Elder Care Costs Deplete Savings Of a Generation", which begins with "to care for her ailing 97-year-old father over the past three years, Elizabeth Rodriquez a Vice President at the Federal Reserve Bank...has borrowed against her 401(k) ... sold her house ...depleted nearly 20 years of savings." Thus, Long Term Care has become a multigenerational issue. The cost of Long Term Care is not covered by our, and generally other, health insurance programs, including Medicare. Medicaid regulations have recently been significantly changed making qualification for Medicaid eligibility more difficult and such programs may be further altered given Federal budgetary concerns, making it increasingly difficult for pensioners to qualify while preserving assets accumulated over a lifetime.

The Long Term Care Insurance (LTCI) issue is a complex one that needs to be evaluated on an individual basis, subject to individual and family financial and insurance coverage circumstances. Thus, Rita Dubrow, Mike Krieger, and Mario Salzano on our Senior Issues Committee recommended that while it would be inappropriate for PARA to recommend what would be appropriate for an individual retiree or their families, given the importance of focusing on the issue, we should at least highlight the issue in this message.

We strongly suggest your evaluating this issue for its applicability to your individual circumstances. I myself have been reading "Long-Term Care" by Joseph L. Matthews 6th Ed. September 2006, which the Wall Street Journal recommended. With surprising frequency, I found myself saying "I never would have thought about that." Or "I have to remember that." The book covers a far wider range of subject matter than its title suggests. It also has an extensive Resource Directory. LTCI may well make sense, but thoughtful individualized consideration is needed. LTCI is promoted to deal with, for example, nursing home costs that otherwise could deplete one's lifelong savings.

Another article titled, "Do You Need Long Term Care Insurance," is in the November 2003 Consumer Reports (its website is www.consumerreports.org). That article helps identify who does and who doesn't need coverage, and indicates what to look for in a policy and an insurer. (Concerning the need for caution in selecting LTCI carriers, see New York Times expose "Aged, Frail and Denied Care by Insurers" 3/26/07 on how some carriers are treating their insureds). Perhaps most useful and comprehensive is "A Shopper's Guide To Long Term Care Insurance," published by the National Association of Insurance Commissioners (816) 842-3600 (whose website is www.naic.org) which contains worksheets to help with your decision and to compare policies. —The Matthews' book has a section on the pros and cons of reverse mortgages. One version allows a homeowner to receive monthly payments for life or until the homeowner is no longer living at home. The FTC has information on reverse mortgages at www.ftc.gov, more specifically, www.ftc.gov/bcp/online/pubs/alerts/revralrt.shtm and related web links.

The Matthews book will help those considering moving into adult communities that provide for moving from "independent living" to "assisted living" and finally to "nursing home" care. Who decides if you are required to move into the nursing home and what criteria are used to determine if you must give up your apartment? Matthews provides good questions as well as what to look for in a contract. AARP's

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PARA-phernalia

Published By:

**Port Authority
Retirees Association, Inc.**

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Roslyn Heights, NY 11577-9998**

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**P.O. Box 6196
Fair Haven, New Jersey 07704**

The Port Authority Retirees Association, Inc. does not provide, and this newsletter does not constitute, legal, accounting, tax or other professional advice. We recommend you contact your own legal, accounting, tax or professional advisor as neither The Port Authority Retirees Association nor anyone associated with the Newsletter assumes responsibility for your relying on the information provided even though we have attempted to ensure that it reflects our understanding of what is presented.

New Features Added to PARA Website

Under the able stewardship of Webmaster Joe SanSevero, several new features have been added to the PARA website to make it even more useful for PA retirees. To make it as easy as possible to navigate through the site, Joe has arranged for the menu to appear at the top of every page on the site. You will find that even when you scroll down to the bottom of any page, the menu floats continually to the top. And this top menu contains several interesting new topics. For example, if you click on "Personal" you will find several sub-categories, including Personal Pages, Message Board and On-Line Forum.

The Personal Pages section contains any information that PA retirees want to share about themselves with other retirees. This may include, for example, stories about their PA experiences, post-retirement activities and photos of retiree get-togethers. John Dickerson recently contributed some interesting tales for this section dealing with his work at PA airports.

The Message Board is for announcements that PA retirees want to make to other retirees. Currently, there is a message there from a retiree looking for a singles tennis partner.

The On-Line Forum is designed to handle comments, questions and discussions on any topic of interest to retirees. This has been an active part of our website so far, with 105 postings on 34 topics as of this writing. Subjects have included taxes, investments, long term care, pensions, Medicare and computer viruses, among others. These new features complement the Bulletin page, which is used to announce reunions, golf outings and similar events. They also complement the "Lunch" page, which lists regular luncheon get-togethers such as the annual Engineering Department lunch and the Last Wednesday of the Month Club.

To facilitate retiree communications with PARA board members, there is now a "Contact Us" menu item at the bottom of each page. Clicking on this item will take you to another page that will let you send an e-mail to the PARA board. In addition, there is a form you can use to contact the board in case you do not have an e-mail address or you don't want to share your e-mail address. Of course, we can't answer your question without a return e-mail address, but if you leave your telephone number someone will respond by phone if requested.

We welcome your comments, questions and suggestions on how we can improve our website and our service to members in other ways.

From Your President - continued from page 1

January 2007 magazine reported on a lawsuit where a retirement community refused to allow a woman to bring in a private aide to her apartment and was insisting she move to a semi private room in their nursing home. The surrender of the apartment to a new occupant meant \$500,000 in fees for the owner.

While we do not pretend to have the expertise to advise you, we seek to follow issues of concern to seniors and their families and pass on what we believe are helpful sources of information from time to time. We strongly suggest your evaluating these matters for applicability to your individual circumstances, now, not when you are under time pressure to make critical decisions affecting you and your loved ones. In the meantime, we list here the following additional information sources for your reference and consideration:

1. www.longtermcare.gov/LTC/Main_Site/index.aspx
2. www.aoa.gov
3. www.ins.state.ny.us/lntmcare.htm
4. www.nyspltc.org



PARA - 2007 Election &

Elections and Annual Meeting

It hardly seems possible but here we are approaching our Annual Meeting date and re-election of Officers whose one year terms are about to expire. We will also be voting for two new candidates, George Jensen and Ralph Verrill who have been nominated by the Board to fill positions vacated by Dick Williams and Mike Krieger. Mike has been appointed as Vice President to replace Al Gonseth. The departures of Dick and Al are discussed elsewhere in our Newsletter.

The meeting will be held at 2:00 P.M., on Thursday June 28, 2007 at the Times Square Hall, Port Authority Bus Terminal in the Borough of Manhattan in the City of New York. Members who previously paid their dues postmarked by May 15, 2007 for the 2006/2007 membership year will be entitled to vote. We have included a list of candidates recommended by the Nominating Committee, the Candidates proposed term of office and a brief biography for each. Also, you need not attend the meeting to vote, as included in this package is an Official Proxy Ballot on which you can indicate your vote for all, some or none of the recommended candidates or submit the names of write-in candidates of your choice if a Member in good standing. Please return your completed Ballot in the enclosed pre-addressed envelope. We encourage you to exercise your right to vote and thus play an active role in "your" organization. To help us with arrangements since the Times Square Hall seats approximately 70 comfortably, if you plan to attend the Annual Meeting, please let us know of your intention to do so by June 20, 2007 by mailing us notice at PARA, P.O. Box 486, Roslyn Heights, NY 11577-9998, or by e-mail to Richard@helman.net.

In the interest of economizing on production costs we have included the Dues Remission Form on the BACK of the Proxy Form. Both your completed ballot and dues form should be returned in the enclosed return envelope.

Candidate Biographies:

Robert (Bob) Jago – Began his career as a police officer in 1951. Bob held several responsible administrative positions and at his retirement in 1988, held the position of Executive Assistant in the Law Department. Following his retirement he worked as an administrator for a private law firm. Bob has been on the Board of Directors and is currently PARA's Secretary.

George Jensen – joined the Port Authority in March 1960 after completing a two year tour of duty in the US Army Corps of Engineers. His father had previously been absorbed into

the Port Authority family when the Brooklyn Piers were purchased from his former employer in 1956. George spent most of his career in the Aviation Department although he also was a member of the Engineering and Economic Development Departments. George retired from the position of Manager, Airport Facilities Division at JFK in August 1995.

Tom Kearney – Spent his entire 30 year career in positions associated with the World Trade Center. At his retirement in 1989, he held the position of Assistant Director, World Trade and

Economic Development Department. Upon retiring Tom went to work for the World Trade Centers Association as Vice President, a position he held until 1997 and he continues to work as a consultant for that group.

Cornelius (Neil) Lynch – Began his 35 year career in the Aviation Department and later worked on the 1964-65 Worlds Fair. He was later assigned to World Trade where he spent most of his career until his retirement in 1988 when he was Deputy Director. In 1981 Neil received the P.A.'s Distinguished Service Medal. He is a

Annual Meeting

Candidate Biographies Continued:

veteran of WW II., a graduate of Fordham University and Law School and is a member of the New York Bar. In 1971 Neil served as Mayor of Cedar Grove, New Jersey where he resides with Eileen, his wife of 54 years.

Al Pettenatti – Began his 40 year career in the Police Division at the G.W.B. and held positions in the Comptrollers, Engineering and Port Development Departments. In April 1962 he joined the World Trade Department with duties connected to the 1964-1965 World's Fair. At retirement in 1994 Al held the position of Manager W.T.C. Observation Deck and Travel, Trade and Tourism Development. In 1991 he was awarded the P.A.'s Distinguished Service Medal and in 1993 the Act of Valor Medal following the 1993 W.T.C. bombing. Al is a Korean War Veteran, a graduate of Adelphi University and lives with his wife in Elmwood Park, New Jersey.

Stan Raith – Began his P.A. career in 1962 following his discharge from the US Navy. During his 32 + years of service Stan held positions in General Services, Rail Transportation, Tunnels Bridges and Terminals and Human Resources. He was Supervisor Employee Benefits at retirement in 1995. Stan a Rutgers University Graduate, is active in his church and community and has been on the Board of Directors of PARA for several years. He is currently Editor of PARA'S Newsletter. Stan with Dick Helman was also one of the eight founders of P.A.P.A.C.

Richard L. Rowe – Retired from the P.A. in June 1994 after 42 years of distinguished service. At the time of his retirement Dick was General Manager of JFK, a position he held for 12 years. During his career Dick held the position of Asst. Director of Aviation, Manager Operating Personnel Division, Asst. Manager and then Manager of the PABT and Manager of Labor

Relations and Equal Employment Opportunity Divisions. Dick attained both his Bachelor's and Master's Degrees in Business from City University.

Ralph Verrill – joined the Port Authority in October 1968 as an attorney in the Leases Division of the Law Department where he remained for the next 32 years participating on behalf of the Authority in a great variety of business and financial arrangements. Ralph retired in December 2000 as Chief of the Division and since then has been enjoying time with family, volunteered as an EMT on his community ambulance squad for three years and volunteered with AARP as a defensive driving instructor. Ralph has acquired a vintage sailboat and MG which he tinkers with and uses as much as he can. He hopes to have the opportunity to participate on the PARA Board to help protect and enhance the position of all fellow Port Authority retirees to the maximum extent possible.

Two Members Step Down From The Board

After solid and responsible service with the PARA Board, **Dick Williams** has opted not to seek re-election – through reason of pressing outside responsibilities. Dick was an invaluable source of common sense and creative suggestions to the Board, and all PA retirees. He justifiably commanded the respect of the Board, and was a major link between the Board and a host of PA retirees and active employees. He will be missed –we wish him well in his attention to other responsibilities.

Al Gonseth moves on. Earlier this year Al advised of his intention to relocate to California. Well, unfortunately that move has occurred. However, Al assures us that he has already started a west coast subsidiary of PARA. Al has been such an integral part of what has made PARA the successful organization it has become. He spent untold hours in Albany representing PARA and acting as its spokesperson on issues of concern to retirees. He was involved with the RPEA as well as APRO, two influential groups that maintain an ongoing line of communication with State representatives in promoting the needs and concerns of retirees. We extend our sincere gratitude for all that he did for us in his quiet and unassuming way. It was a pleasure having him on the Board for all these years and his advice and counsel to all of us will be missed.

AVOIDING THE “SLIPPERY SLOPE” OF UNFAIR INCREASES IN MEDICARE COSTS — *NEEDED CONGRESSIONAL ACTION*

When most of our PARA Members retired, they thought their responsibility for health care costs would be stable and predictable. Upon reaching 65, and entering “Medicare eligibility,” many of us found a new expense; that is, having to pay Part B of Medicare. Given the likely coincident receipt of Social Security, the net effect may not have been viewed as that significant, even though some have commented that it is an expense that surprised them.

Unfortunately, due to a recent change in Federal law, the amount payable by individual seniors per month for Medicare Part B will now be tied to a “means test” contrary to the original premise of Medicare. The schedule for increases in this payment amount will make it much more onerous for many of our Members, and unfairly so in the opinion of your Board of Directors.

Both the Social Security and Medicare programs were meant to be universal insurance programs and not welfare programs. Those with higher income have already paid more in Medicare payroll taxes and into the Social Security system. We are concerned that this change is starting down “the slippery slope” and allowing it to continue is like letting “the camel’s nose under the tent.” Whatever one calls it, your Board is concerned that Medicare Part B Premiums (Medical), as now newly “means tested,” will cause unfair contribution levels for our retirees required to pay for Part B Medicare. The law went into effect in January of this year and by 2009, it is expected that some higher income seniors will be paying \$314.56 at the top end or triple the standard Part B premium of \$98.30 a month. It is true the increased premiums only begin to kick in for individuals having incomes in excess of \$80,000.00 or couples in excess of \$160,000.00, but it is from a policy standpoint a change in the premise of the “insurance” we each paid for. Further, what is to prevent Congress from lowering the “kick-in” point now that the principle has been established? While as passed the law indexes the “kick-in” point for inflation, the President has proposed eliminating the indexing. Over time, more and more middle class individuals will be subject to the higher premiums if the President has his way. This is not unlike the Alternative Minimum Tax which was meant to be a tax on millionaires who were avoiding taxes and now is hitting many in the middle class.

The President’s 2008 Budget also proposes applying the same “means testing” to the new Part D (Drug) program so the reference to a slippery slope seems apt. Is the next shoe to drop a means test for Social Security?

Yes, we may be viewed as alarmists, but this is one area where a movement to change the ground rules for these “insurance programs” should be nipped in the bud. These changes and proposed changes particularly for Medicare Part B unfairly change the terms for receiving benefits paid for by the deductions from salaries over the many years of working. Again, these “insurance” programs were meant to be universal insurance programs, and not welfare programs subject to “means testing.” Those with higher income paid more in Medicare payroll taxes and into the Social Security system already.

To prevent the undermining of these programs, we recommend you contact and/or write your Congressperson letting him or her know your concerns and your support for passage of legislation to repeal Part B means testing and urge defeat of any attempt to means test Part D (Drug Coverage). If you don’t know who your Senators or House Members are, you can find out simply by accessing the website, www.house.gov for the House, and www.senate.gov for the Senate. To learn more about these and related issues, you can go to the website of the National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare at www.ncpssm.org

Dick Helman, President, and Mike Krieger, Vice President

The Library Corner

If you haven't read it yet, then "Closure: The Untold Story of the Ground Zero Recovery Mission" recommended by Bob Jago may be something you want to add to your summer reading list. The author, Retired Port Authority Police Lieutenant, Bill Keegan, served as Operations Commander of the World Trade Center Rescue/Recovery Team from 9/11/2001 through May 30, 2002. In this powerful and personal real life drama he describes in graphic detail the harrowing ordeal he and other Port Authority Police Personnel faced during their courageous attempt to rescue the injured and recover the remains of the unfortunate 9/11 victims. Lieutenant Keegan's account focuses on the valiant efforts of the many uniformed services personnel at the site and the significant contributions of the Port Authority Police in particular. You can find this telling story of heroic acts of selflessness in major book outlets.



If you have read any good books that you think your fellow retirees may enjoy, please E-mail me information at: lyst99@aol.com or mail it to me at 4 Margaret Lane, Howell, New Jersey 07731. I will try to include your reading suggestions in future Newsletters.



The PARA Gallery



PHOTO PROVIDED BY ANTHONY DE BIASE

This photo was taken on June 28, 1995, at Memories Restaurant; since renamed In Napoli. Those of you who attended the Last Wednesday of the Month luncheons back then may recall the Palisades Park motif which is now gone as are sadly, several of those pictured. (Kneeling-Holbrook, Dolan, Gelman, Duncan and Littau-Front Row-Fontanella, Fitzgibbons, O'Reilly, Chirles, Katz, Williams, Dale, Schleif, McGowan and Morgan and taking up the rear-Foti, Doogan, Heoflinger, Endresen, Kirschner, Stark, Johnson and Goldberg)

A Request for Photos

Please send us snapshots of recent or past PA and PARA get-togethers and special events along with a brief description and if possible, the names of those pictured in the photo. Prints, color slides and digital images are acceptable. When sending digital photos, only high-resolution photos at a minimum resolution of 900 x 1200 dpi will reproduce at the desired quality.