

PARA-phernalia

Your **P**ort **A**uthority **R**etirees **A**ssociation Newsletter • Edition Number 36 • Fall 2006

The Port Authority Retirees Association (PARA) History

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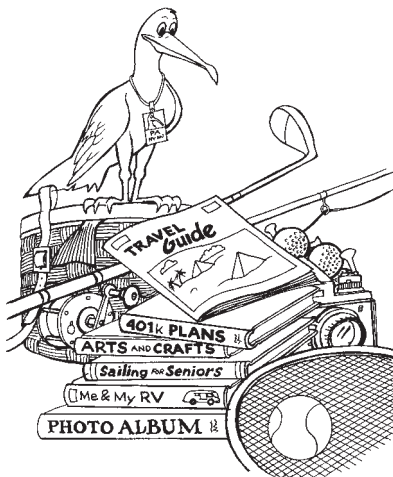
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"The worth of our lives comes not in what we do or who we know but by who we are"

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



Retirees depend on their pensions to maintain their quality of life during their senior years, but over time with inflation their purchasing power is diminished. Every few years, the New York State Legislature would half heartedly recommend a "supplement" for NY State Retirement System retirees and then forward the legislation to the Governor for signature. More often than not the Governor would not sign the legislation, thereby causing financial hardship for many retirees.

In the early 1980's Comptroller Regan wrote to Governor Cuomo stating that "an employee who retired in 1976 has only received supplementation of 6% and yet the cost of living increased by 89%." This left many Port Authority and other state retirees thousands of dollars behind federal retirees and pensioners from other states whose pensions were tied into the "Cost of Living Adjustment" (COLA) index.

It became clear that the pensions of Port Authority retirees were not keeping pace with inflation and something needed to be done. Consequently, a concerned group of eight Port Authority retirees decided to organize the power of all 3000 p+ Port Authority retirees by creating PARA and working with them and other NY State Retirement System retirees to press for a COLA bill.

The original eight Port Authority retirees who created PARA were:
Officers: Harold A. Milley, President; Cyril V. Storer, Vice President; John A. Huston, Jr., Treasurer
Board Members: Cletus F. Bamber, Richard Brady, Ralph A. Johnson, Stephen P. Kenny, Francis H. Werneke

The PA Human Resources Department provided PARA an address list of all Port Authority retirees. The first semi-annual PARA Newsletter issued in May 1987 clearly identified the need for a COLA. Retirees were made aware of the need for group action and were provided with names and addresses of those legislators who needed to be contacted about the problem.

That first Newsletter also indicated that PARA was working closely with the Retired Public Employees Association (RPEA). RPEA includes all of the New York State Retirement System retirees and has 19 active chapters throughout New York State and several "retiree" states such as Florida and the Carolinas. In fact, in the late 1980's PARA and RPEA officers were instrumental in creating another group called the Alliance of Public Retiree Organizations (APRO) that includes the Retired Teachers Association, the Retired Police Association and many other retiree groups that represent a total of over 500,000 retirees. A PARA representative attends monthly APRO meetings in Albany to assure that all NYS retirees are working together on common retiree issues.

The most important issue facing PARA, APRO, and RPEA was getting a COLA adjustment. That effort finally proved successful... to a degree. If you met the criteria, your September 2000 pension check showed an increase of 50% of the actual COLA index for the first \$18,000 of your pension. In addition all future pension checks will be increased annually in September based on 50% of the actual increase in the cost of living for the first \$18,000. We are clearly not satisfied with this but it is a beginning. PARA, APRO and RPEA have continued to work diligently to get a full COLA, not a 50% COLA and we want it for the full amount of the pension. This is a long term commitment that will require perseverance, coordination and good timing as we face significant obstacles. Besides COLA issues PARA has been working on bringing retirees together via a greatly expanded and more professional semi-annual Newsletter with photographs, news items and other articles of interest to Port Authority Retirees. PARA has established a "PARA WEB SITE" that contains links to many other established web sites which should be helpful to all. A detailed article about our web site is included elsewhere in this newsletter.

From the first issue of the PARA Newsletter to the 37th Issue, we have expanded to almost 4000 Port Authority and PATH retirees. The modest annual dues of \$5.00 helps us to keep retirees apprised of what is going on that may affect them. Let us know your thoughts...please.

Officers & Board of Directors

Al Rubbert, *President Emeritus*

New York:

Richard Helman, *Pres.*
Alan Gonseth, *Vice Pres.*
Phil Cheney, *Treasurer*
Patricia Beckhard
Thomas Donovan
Lee Goodman
Richard Rowe
Mario Salzano
Rosemarie Smith Vincent

New Jersey:

Merle Robb, *2nd Vice Pres.*
Robert Jago, *Secretary*
Stanley Raith, *Editor*
Rita DuBrow
Thomas Kearney
Michael Krieger
Cornelius Lynch
Alfred Pettenati
Harmon Williams
Richard Williams

PARA-phernalia

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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.

A Message From Your President

On June 29th PARA held its first Annual Meeting. The main item on the agenda was the election of a Board of Directors. The election was a milestone and represented an effort to bring our practices both in line with the law's requirements and to make PARA more responsive to you the membership. There were contradictory concerns; on the one hand that there wouldn't be the minimum 100 members' votes the law requires and on the other hand, believe it or not, that Times Square Hall, which can seat approximately 75 would be too small if more than 50 members attended as there would also be about 20 Board members in attendance. We should have had more faith in our membership and we were delighted that you responded in such great numbers. We had been told that organizations have had problems obtaining the legal minimum number of votes but that certainly was not an issue for us. More than one half of those eligible voted. The Board considers these results a vote of confidence, that you consider PARA's role as important, and that the Board has a real responsibility to act to further your interests. The slate of directors nominated by the Nominating Committee received an overwhelming vote of support. (The actual vote tally is reported separately.) The Inspectors of Election, Alice Herman and Holly Blausner gave generously of their time and made sure of the count, and if you know them you know it would have to be by the book.

As to our other concern; the limited seating capacity, only one member Joseph Lesser appeared in person! I do feel badly that another member came about a half hour before the Annual Meeting while a regular Board meeting was in progress and I asked him to return at 2 PM but he failed to do so. Whoever you are please accept my sincere apology as we certainly had nothing to hide and you could have doubled our attendance. The Time Square Hall was used because it is generously made available without charge and is conveniently located.

Given the fact that the Board is made up of individuals of retirement age it makes sense to have capable members in the wings to fill vacancies as they occur. In the last year, two very capable Board members stepped down: Henry Lee and Ed O'Malley. Fortunately, Rita DuBrow who has helped so many of us when she was in HRD took ED's slot and Phil Cheney took Henry's both as a Director and Treasurer. We can't always count on being so fortunate. Therefore I would like those of you who have a real interest in serving as a Director to write to Tom Donovan, 2 Roxbury Road, Garden City, New York 11530. Tom is Chairman of the Nominating & Board Development Committee. Please enclose a brief Bio and if you have any ideas as to how we can better serve the membership they would certainly be welcome. Board members are expected to attend four Board meetings each year and work on committee assignments. My thought is that selected candidates might attend Board meetings and while they would not vote they could participate in the discussion, and might be given assignments. In that manner they would know what they are getting into and we would have an opportunity to get to know them.

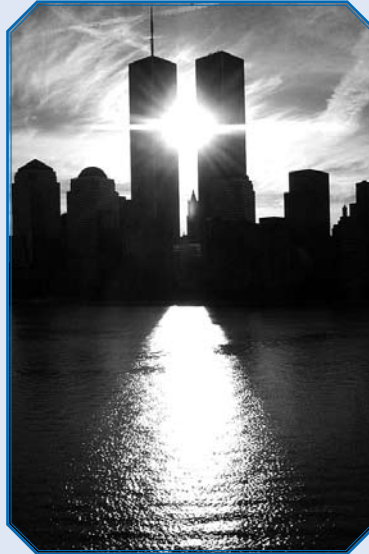
Elsewhere in this Newsletter is an article about our web site which I am confident will be of real service to many of you. One aspect that excites me is its potential to immediately mobilize a large segment of the membership without incurring the substantial cost of a postal mailing. From time to time there is a need to write to an elected public official on a matter that affects our interest that he/she is about to act upon. While as in the past I could write "On behalf of the thousands of PARA members", we can now quickly get an e-mail to many of you asking that you add your own individual voice. I have been repeatedly told that elected officials monitor very closely and are influenced by the amount of mail they receive relevant to pending legislative issues. While I will continue to write, your many voices will count far more. Judging from how many of you voted in the election I believe PARA can be a more potent force in the future with your support.

9/11

SADLY THEY'RE GONE

...but Their Memory Will Live On Forever

| | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|
| Joseph Amatuccio | Ozone Park, N.Y. |
| Officer Christopher C. Amoroso | Staten Island, N.Y. |
| Jean A. Andrucki | Hoboken, N.J. |
| Richard A. Aronow | Mahwah, N.J. |
| Ezra Aviles | Commack, N.Y. |
| Arlene T. Babakitis | Secaucus, N.J. |
| James W. Barbella | Oceanside, N.Y. |
| Officer Maurice V. Barry | Rutherford, N.J. |
| Margaret L. Benson | Rockaway, N.J. |
| Daniel D. Bergstein | Teaneck, N.J. |
| Edward Calderon | Jersey City, N.J. |
| Officer Liam Callahan | Rockaway, N.J. |
| Lieutenant Robert D. Cirri | Nutley, N.J. |
| Carlos Dacosta | Elizabeth, N.J. |
| Dwight D. Darcy | Bronxville, N.Y. |
| Niurka Davila | New York, N.Y. |
| Officer Clinton Davis | Massapequa, N.Y. |
| Frank A. De Martini | Brooklyn, N.Y. |
| William F. Fallon | Rocky Hill, N.J. |
| Stephen J. Fiorelli | Aberdeen, N.J. |
| John Fisher | Hoboken, N.J. |
| Officer Donald A. Foreman | Staten Island, N.Y. |
| Officer Gregg J. Froehner | Chester, N.J. |
| Barry H. Glick | Wayne, N.J. |
| Rosa Gonzalez | Jersey City, N.J. |
| Officer Thomas E. Gorman | Middlesex, N.J. |
| Joseph F. Grillo | Staten Island, N.Y. |
| Ken G. Grouzalis | Lyndhurst, N.J. |
| Patrick A. Hoey | Middletown, N.J. |
| Officer Uhuru G. Houston | Englewood, N.J. |
| Officer George G. Howard | Hicksville, N.Y. |
| Officer Stephen Huczko | Hampton, N.J. |
| Inspector Anthony P. Infante Jr | Chatham, N.J. |
| Prem N. Jerath | Edison, N.J. |



| | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------|
| Mary S. Jones | New York, N.Y. |
| Officer Paul W. Jurgens | Levittown, N.Y. |
| Deborah H. Kaplan | Paramus, N.J. |
| Douglas G. Karpiloff | Mamaroneck, N.Y. |
| Sergeant Robert M. Kaulfers | Kenilworth, N.J. |
| Edward T. Keane | West Caldwell, N.J. |
| Frank Lalama | Nutley, N.J. |
| Officer Paul Laszczynski | Paramus, N.J. |
| Officer David P. Lemagne | North Bergen, N.J. |
| Officer John J. Lennon | Howell, N.J. |
| Officer John D. Levi | Lexington, N.Y. |
| Executive Director, Neil D. Levin | New York, N.Y. |
| Margaret S. Lewis | Elizabeth, N.J. |
| Officer James F. Lynch | Woodbridge, N.J. |

| | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Robert H. Lynch | Cranford, N.J. |
| Myrna Maldonado | Bronx, N.Y. |
| Captain Kathy Mazza | South Farmingdale, N.Y. |
| Officer Walter A. McNeil | East Stroudsburg, PA. |
| Deborah A. Merrick | New York, N.Y. |
| Officer Donald J. McIntyre | New City, N.Y. |
| Susan Miszkowicz | New York, N.Y. |
| Supt. of Police Fred V. Morrone | Lakewood, N.J. |
| Nancy Muniz | Ridgewood (Queens), N.Y. |
| Officer Joseph M. Navas | Paramus, N.J. |
| Pete Negron | Bergenfield, N.J. |
| Officer James Nelson | Clark, N.J. |
| Officer Alfonse J. Niedermeyer III | Manasquan, N.J. |
| David Ortiz | Nanuet, N.Y. |
| Pablo Ortiz | Staten Island, N.Y. |
| Officer James W. Parham | Jackson Heights, N.Y. |
| Nancy E. Perez | Union City, N.J. |
| Officer Dominick A. Pezzulo | Bronx, N.Y. |
| Eugene J. Raggio | Staten Island, N.Y. |
| Judith Reese | Kearny, N.J. |
| Officer Bruce A. Reynolds | Columbia, N.J. |
| Francis S. Riccardelli | Westwood, N.J. |
| Officer Antonio J. Rodrigues | Port Washington, N.Y. |
| Officer Richard Rodriguez | Cliffwood, N.J. |
| Chief James A. Romito | Westwood, N.J. |
| Kalyan K. Sarkar | Westwood, N.J. |
| Anthony Savas | Astoria, N.Y. |
| Officer John P. Skala | Clifton, N.J. |
| Edward T. Strauss | Edison, N.J. |
| Officer Walwyn W. Stuart | Valley Stream, N.Y. |
| Officer Kenneth F. Tietjen | Matawan, N.J. |
| Lisa L. Trerotola | Hazlet, N.J. |
| Officer Nathaniel Webb | Jersey City, N.J. |
| Simon Weiser | Brooklyn, N.Y. |
| Officer Michael T. Wholey | Westwood, N.J. |
| Louie Williams | Bronx, N.Y. |

You may not receive this issue before 9/11, but it is still appropriate. Even after this fifth anniversary of 9/11, it's important that we take time to honor all of our fallen family members, friends and associates -- and recall those magnificent sentinels that watched over Lower Manhattan, the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island where many of you or your ancestors began lives in this wonderful country of ours. The Twin Towers, World Trade Center and World Trade. Whatever we may have called it, the World Trade Center has a special meaning to us all and will always hold a place in our hearts, in our lives and in those of our families. For many of us it was our "home away from home," a place where we could watch a beautiful sunrise or sunset or even the moon rising over a tranquil city. Family members also were able to enjoy it on special occasions; when visiting the spectacular Observation Deck, viewing Independence Day fireworks displays or the parade of Tall Ships up the Hudson.

We were all proud to say that we worked at a place that dominated the downtown New York skyline and to answer queries from our friends and families about what it was like to work in such a tall building. Many of us spent much of our daily lives traveling to this engineering and architectural wonder. Whether you walked on the city streets, came out of the subway system or enjoyed a ferry ride to work, you probably never tired of seeing the different perspectives the towers offered. You may have been fortunate enough to have enjoyed summer entertainment or ceremonies on the Plaza. Or maybe you were there when the "Austin J. Tobin Plaza" was dedicated to honor our incomparable Executive Director. You may have shared lunch on the Plaza with your sweetheart, your colleagues or a friend or family member. Whatever memories you may hold in your heart about life at the World Trade Center, don't be saddened by what we lost -- but smile and be glad for that something very special that we and those who did not survive all had in our lives. Remember too that we must be ever vigilant because the freedoms we enjoy make us vulnerable and we must continue to hope that we never see another terrible September day and most importantly remember those of our Port Authority family who were lost.



PARA - Annual Election Results

Following are the results of the annual election held on June 29, 2006.

The results are in rank order for the terms indicated.

1 YEAR

| | |
|--------------|-----|
| Robert Jago | 879 |
| Al Gonseth | 873 |
| Stan Raith | 871 |
| Dick Rowe | 871 |
| Neil Lynch | 866 |
| Al Pettenati | 862 |

2 YEAR

| | |
|-----------------|-----|
| Dick Helman | 881 |
| Tom Donovan | 879 |
| Harmon Williams | 873 |
| Merle Robb | 869 |
| Mike Krieger | 852 |
| Lee Goodman | 838 |

3 YEAR

| | |
|-------------------------|-----|
| Rita DuBrow | 920 |
| Rosemarie Smith Vincent | 864 |
| Phil Cheney | 853 |
| Pat Beckhard | 852 |

*In addition the following write-in candidates received one vote each:
John Curcurutto, Dave Morris and Joe Tolciss.*



Do You Know This Dude

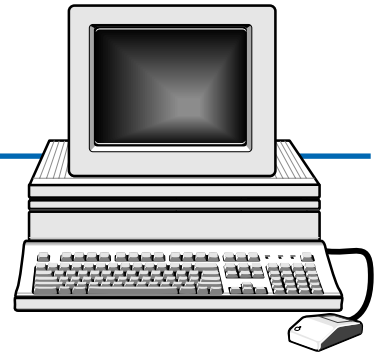
This photo, though it may be somewhat blurry, shows the unmistakable likeness of a Port Authority softball icon. Whether you called him Dude, Bob, Bobby or by his surname Dudajek many of you remember one of the “aces” of the P. A.’s softball league. His accomplishments and escapades are well known and many. He will be remembered for years to come and those who follow will I’m sure hear stories of his accomplishments on the field.

Sadly Bob Dudajek has decided after forty years; that’s right folks; forty years; to hang up his spikes, cleats or whatever they call that unfashionable footwear softball players wear. His glove will be enconced in the Dude Hall of Fame, his spikes bronzed and passed on through future generations and his pitching arm; well he has decided to keep that.

Bob was a player on the Downtowners and later World Trade, known for his outstanding hitting ability and may well hold the record for home runs hit in his league. He was respected by his teammates and opposing players and was always a gentleman on and off the field. Bob, we thank you for showing us true sportsmanship, providing us with some exciting moments on the field (the beverages afterwards weren’t bad either) and wish you well in your future endeavors. Someone recently told me that Bob was in training for the Iron Man Decathlon. Come on Bob who are you kidding.

S.Raith

NEW! A PARA Web Site...



With more and more PA retirees surfing the Internet these days, the PARA board has decided that it's time for PARA to have a web site of its own. Thanks to the efforts of Joe SanSevero, a PA retiree with extensive knowledge and experience in this field, PARA'S web site is already up and operating at www.paranynj.org.

Our goal is to make the site the best resource possible for PA retirees. Although it was just established, it already has a good assortment of information. For example, you will find a review of PARA's mission and activities, including PARA's support of efforts to upgrade the COLA provisions of PA pensions.

One section includes links to quite a few other sites of interest, such as the New York State Retirement System, Social Security, United Healthcare, Medicare and Express Scripts, among others.

Another section gives you quick access to a number of forms you may need that deal with medical and dental insurance claims, changes in personal status, retirement applications, electronic fund transfer arrangements and more.

Thinking about moving out of the area? A table on the new site will show you the current tax features of every state. And for those states that have an income tax, it shows whether state residents receiving New York State pension income get a tax break and exactly what the break amounts to.

In addition, there is contact information for benefits questions, a copy of our latest newsletter as well as the "PA News" weekly electronic newsletters on the site. A Bulletin Board on the web site, with over a dozen registered users so far, gives all retirees an opportunity to post messages of general interest, such as scheduled retiree reunions and similar gatherings, including the "Last Wednesday of the Month Club."

The "Members" section of the site is accessible only by PARA members using a simple password. We don't have any deep, dark secrets, of course, but there are a number of information items such as COLA strategies and free parking at airports that would not be appropriate for the general public.

Here's just one example of how the site can benefit retirees. The PA Human Resources Department had been unable to locate the spouses of four retirees to notify them about improved prescription benefits. An HR representative requested our assistance, so we published HR's message on the site asking anyone with contact information to get in touch with the HR Department. We were subsequently advised that our efforts met with some success and we received a personal thank you from Rosetta Janotto, Acting Director of Human Resources.

One of the nice things about a web site is that it can be revised easily with up-to-date news or other features. We will now be able to communicate much more quickly with PARA members – a feature that will be very handy for matters that require fast action.

Please take a look at www.paranynj.org, and let us know what you think. It's your web site, after all, so feel free to send us your comments and suggestions. Any message dealing with PARA activities should be addressed to PARA President Dick Helman (Richard@helman.net). Messages dealing with the web site itself should be addressed to Webmaster Joe SanSevero (joe@sansevero.us) with a copy to Tom Kearney (tkwtca@aol.com).

And for those of you who haven't yet ventured into the cyberspace world, this is a great time to get started. As you may know, learning new things involving the brain and some manual dexterity is highly recommended for us (ahem) late middle-agers. And if you need some help, spend some quality time with your grandchildren. They will be glad to show you how easy it is!



The PARA Gallery

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.

The Library Corner



If you're looking for a good end of summer read, then "The Miracle of Saint Anthony" by Adrian Wojnarowski may be just for you. It's an easy read and for those born and raised in Hudson County or anywhere in New Jersey for that matter, it's a story they can relate to if they ever followed high school basketball. Basketball and the name Hurley have gone together for many years and Saint Anthony High School has always been a basketball powerhouse. Coach Bob Hurley has taken the team through many memorable seasons and at the same time has been instrumental in getting his players into college basketball programs, something many of them would not have been able to do without his help and guidance. The fact that your Editor is an alumnus (class of 57) has, of course, nothing to do with my recommendation. When last I checked, the book was available from Barnes & Noble. Read and enjoy.

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.

Using your EZ Pass at PA Airports

We have had many requests for information regarding EZ Pass and parking at our airports and were provided with the following information by Jon Clark, of the Aviation Department. We hope you find it helpful.

E-ZPass works at all parking lots at all airports, except for the overflow lots at JFK and EWR. Those lots only get used when the Long Term/Economy lots are full, but the cashiers know that owning an orange tag should get you free parking there too.

For both active and retired employees, parking in the Long Term Lot at JFK, Economy Lot P6 at EWR and Lot 5 (east of the Delta Terminal) at LGA is free for as long as you stay. If you're going to be there for more than 30 days, however, you have to let the parking operator know so that they won't assume the car is abandoned and tow it after 30 days.

In all of the rest of the lots (short term and daily, at all three airports) you can park for UP TO 4 hours for free. If you go beyond 4 hours, you have to pay the full amount from the beginning of when you parked.

Active Annual Pass holders can park in any lot for as long as they want for free, but except for Service A and a few others, when they retire they revert to ordinary retiree status, and free parking is restricted as above.

Now that we finally got E-ZPass Plus installed at Lot 6 at EWR, your orange, Non-Revenue Employee E-ZPass displayed when you exit the lot will get you out for free. You can also still use any paper Employee Personal Pass you might have, but they're not issuing them any more, and we'll be phasing out their acceptance in the future.

Membership Dues 2006-2007

Thank-you to those who returned your membership dues after our election mailing.

For those of you who did not use the enclosed self mailer to do so.

Just fill out the remittance envelope, enclose your check and mail.