



Journey

Junior

Butler County Chapter Newsletter
Website: www.pasrbutler.org

January 2021

This is a "Journey Junior" so we can stay in closer contact between our regular four issues.

President's Message

"to serve others in need and help one another"

The PASR Mission Statement, above, sums it up. Butler Chapter is here to serve and help.

Initially, we help each other. Just as airline passengers are taught to put on the personal air mask before helping others, we start by supporting our own members. We send cards of cheer. We have means available for financial support. Our members can access insurance and consumer goods at a discount. We stay in contact via *Journey* and the website. PASR gives us an identity, a sense of belonging to a larger community. We may be in isolation, but we are not alone; we matter to each other.

We help our community neighbors with scholarships, awards for service, and yearly recognition of a teacher and aide in a county school district. Our members donate needed supplies for the Center Avenue Community School. In normal times, we donate supplies for senior centers, and offer retirement planning help for those currently in education. Our activities have been limited but we still find ways to serve. We adapt!

Recently I was asked by Judy Schaffer, our state president, to serve on a state ad hoc committee for the purpose of creating Zoom training for chapter leaders across the state. This gave me access to the results of a *Survey Monkey* with seven questions that were sent to chapter presidents and district directors. Please note that not every chapter responded. 37 did, out of possible 60 or so.

"How are you touching base?"

Here are some comments from a minority response from across the state: (continued page 2, column B)

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Educational Support Diana Bowman
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Moniteau Carol Ball
Seneca Valley Ruth Kirk
Slippery Rock Ellen McIntyre
South Butler Virginia Shirey,
..... Doris Herceg

(continued from page 1)

"I don't think we are...The only time I hear from members is when there is a death in our chapter."

"Our chapter is currently on hold."

"We have had no newsletters or meetings this year."

The majority of responders are using newsletters, snail mail, phone calls, conference calls, and emails for those for whom they have email addresses.

So far Butler Chapter has had 3 exec board meetings and 2 general membership meetings via Zoom. A few chapters reported having a board meeting via Zoom, but I haven't found another that held a full Zoom chapter meeting. Butler Chapter will continue with online meetings. **NOTE:** Our next General Membership meeting is **March 24**. Also: May 26, Sept. 22, and Dec. 8. Plan to attend!



That's why I was asked to serve on this small committee that will conduct Zoom training. Butler Chapter has learned from experience, which has produced tips to share with other chapters who are ready to step up and move forward. We can serve others in need.

In 2020 PASR recommended *no* face-to-face meetings. That continues in 2021 for the spring but understand that it possibly could continue all 2021. There are those across the state who don't want to try Zoom or anything new, and are resigned to wait for face-to-face again. But wait two years???? I felt bad waiting six months

to restart our Butler meetings. I thought I was derelict.

Let's look at it another way. When I graduated in 1973, I thought that I was ready to teach. I had my first job and was ready to go but slowly my district began to make changes based on new best practices. Endless in-service training caused us to stretch. I was involved with that as both a participant and a trainer. My last ten years of teaching had a very different look than my first ten years.

And then in 2011, I retired, joined PASR Butler (Thanks, Fergie!!) and started as newsletter editor in 2013. Butler Chapter had started in 1964 so was long established; members were comfortable that PASR would continue in the same way. I thought so, too.

Covid-19 has changed that. It just won't work to do nothing for two years. We have the technology to help ourselves and that's what we are doing! We have something of value here that we need to preserve for our own benefit as well as the advantage to our community.

Yes, I think it is fair to say that there was some ostrich behavior when we first tried a Zoom meeting. It is said that Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II sometimes has the same reaction when her family members have some outlandish media problems, but eventually, the point does come where even she must move forward. We need to get our heads out of the sand and face the need to meet via Zoom.



In the September *Journey* I offered some hands-on help. (That issue is available online www.pasrbutler.org) Then click on "Journey Sept 2020" in the quick links and scroll to pages 6-8.

Here's what I need from you:

1. Go out of your way to contact another member just to check in, to say hello, to support from a distance. Every one of us is experiencing change and perhaps, loss due to covid-19. Loss is hard. Feeling isolated is hard.
2. Think about how you can get online. Talk to your young relatives/friends about this. It does not have to be a laptop. It is easiest, but you can also Zoom online via smart phone, tablet, iPad, and even just audio on your old cell or house phone with a landline if it has buttons. I've tested them all, just to be sure!
3. For video use, best to first download the Zoom app. Ask friends/relatives to set up a Zoom call so you can practice. No camera? If you have a USB outlet, you can get an external camera for less than \$20 on Amazon. Besides, think of the new family opportunities! It's fun!!!
4. Share with me how you are staying positive! We are pulling together!

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PASR, Butler Chapter

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PASR

Pennsylvania Association of School Retirees



January 2021

Just checking in! How
are you today? How
are you staying
positive?