



Journey

Butler County Chapter Newsletter
Website: www.pasrbutler.org

December 2020

President's Message

My husband and I avoid driving into Pittsburgh for theater shows and concerts. Don't like the ticket and parking prices, the traffic, walking blocks to the theater, the narrow auditorium seating with no leg room, the stairs, and many other annoyances that become deal breakers for me.

But this year, entertainment has created new ways for *them* to earn money while *we* benefit by being able to view some fantastic professional programs, via live streaming, either free or pay-per-view. Livestream events and virtual concerts are waiting for you to view right in your own home. Keystone Safari, just north of Slippery Rock is having a drive-thru light show. And don't forget Shadrack Christmas Wonderland, the musical light show at the Butler Fair Grounds. Seeking a Christmas Eve Candlelight Service? If a church usually has online Facebook or Zoom Sunday service, then see if they will have Christmas Eve online. This is the year to find new ways to celebrate. Don't focus on what you think you're missing. Instead find some new gems that you can enjoy while safely social

distancing or even in quarantine. Choose to be happy!

The CDC says that covid doesn't care that it's a holiday. Covid is on the rise across the nation. Now is not the time to let our guard down and say, "It's the holiday and let's be merry." We need to maintain our vigilance here. Don't be bullied into taking stupid chances just to gather in close situations with people you haven't seen since last Christmas. It is fine to be with your immediate family or people with whom you interact regularly. Try Zoom or other live venues for family get togethers.

So, when we will be back together, face-to-face at our regular luncheon? Bottomline is that I don't know, and neither does our state HQ. When we can do it safely, we will. Thanks to all our PASR Butler exec board members who have adapted willingly for our Zoom board meetings. Thanks to all our chapter members who are willing to take part in our Zoom meetings and try something new! You are all truly our **Volunteers of the Year** for stepping up to help, to check on others, to adapt and support. Super job! Congratulations!

Butler Chapter Officers

President ... 724-584-0371... Polly Shaw
pollyshaw@zoominternet.net
President-elect **OPEN**
Recording Secretary..... Fran Geisel
Corresponding Sec'y **OPEN**
Immediate Past Pres. Peg Harding
harding.margaret@gmail.com
724-502-4065
Region VIII Director..... Mary K Davis
Treasurer James Huemme
khuemme@zoominternet.net
Asst. Treasurer..... Joanne Nolsheim
Website www.pasrbutler.org
State website www.pasr.org

Committee Chairs

Legislative and L/PEC..... Peg Harding
Retirement Planning..... **OPEN**
RECREO M. Hoffman, J. Nolsheim
Social Services/Memorial Honor Fund
..... Ruth Scott
By-Laws Joanne Meredith
Educational Support.... Diana Bowman
Community Service..... Peg Harding
Member Benefits & Services **OPEN**

Nomination **OPEN**
Reservations Donna Vogel
Resolutions **OPEN**
Public Relations Polly Shaw
Luncheon..... Donna Vogel

PASR School Entity Area Chairs

Butler Area Sharon Kline
BC3 Ruth Scott
Karns City.... Pat Hauman, Enid Wilson
Mars Priscilla Beblo
Moniteau Carol Ball
Seneca Valley..... Ruth Kirk
Slippery Rock..... Ellen McIntyre
South Butler Virginia Shirey,
..... Doris Herceg

ADVICE FROM NURSES

Wear a mask

Wash hands frequently

Social distancing at large gatherings

Stay home when sick

Get a flu shot

Butler County Council PASR
General Membership
Luncheon Meeting
September 23, 2020
Zoom Meeting

Polly welcomed us.

Meeting called to order at 12:05 with Polly's gavel.

Pledge of Allegiance.

Song- This Land is Your Land.

President's Report- Thank you to everyone trying the Zoom meeting format. Polly acknowledges attendance of state President Elect William Neugebauer. There will be no in-person meetings for the rest of the year. Also, no regular awards. Next Executive Council meeting is October 22 and next General Membership meeting is December 9. Both meetings via Zoom. 2021 meetings will be addressed at the February 2021 Executive Council meeting.

Treasurer's Report- in Journey. Major fund raiser is trips, which have been cancelled.

Region 8 Report- Mary K. attended Mercer and Clarion picnic meetings

which went well. State reviewing By-Laws. State office running with skeleton crews. Kudos to staff. Mark McKillop's mother died.

Membership report- let know if there is a change in address. Put reminder in Journey. Each school district representative send new retirees list.

SS/MHF Report- let Ruth know of new shut-ins so she can contact them. Center Avenue has not gotten back with information on donations.

Community Service Report- email with community service list of things done during the pandemic. Making a list of creative community service ideas.

Program- Jessica McMenamin with "Tips for Economic Travel."

Meeting adjourned 1:20.

Respectfully Submitted,
Frances Geisel
Recording Secretary

Butler County Council PASR
Executive Board Minutes
October 22,2020
Zoom Meeting

Attending Polly Shaw, Fran Geisel, Jim Huemme, Mary K Davis, Ruth Scott, Doris Herceg, Peg Harding, Sharon Kline, Virginia Shirey.
Polly called the meeting to order at 10:00.

August, 2020 minutes read and approved.

President Report- September Zoom meeting went well. December meeting will be at 12:00 noon December 9. Email from Lori Duffy regarding use of award money. Thank you from BC3 student Stephanie Kish for Scholarship.

Invite Stephanie to December meeting. Tentative December program John and Anne Phipps with a guitar/harp program on Zoom.

Treasurer Report- in Journey. Add membership reminder to Journey. SS/MHF send contributions to Jim to put in the account.

Region 8 Report- Chapters to decide for themselves whether to maintain officers or elect new ones. Lawrence County invited to join other groups. Need a list of new retirees. State office on skeleton staff especially for mail. Discount for Joe's Auto in eastern part of the state. A new handbook for presidents is being made available.

Community Service Report- Walmart and Target cards being collected for Center Avenue School. The Cancer Center may be taking donations of hats. Report will be in Journey. All members will be Volunteer of the Year with certificate printed in Journey.

SS/MHF- Sent out cards to keep in touch. Report will be in Journey. Send Ruth names for cards to be sent. Send card to Judith Schaffer, state President, for speedy recovery.

Calendar 2021-Accepted. Motion made by Ruth Scott. Executive Board

Meetings on Thursdays- February 4, April 8, August 5, October 21.

General Membership meetings on Wednesdays- March 24, May 26, September 22, December 8, 2021.

Election situation will be presented in Journey. Vote will be taken at General Membership meeting by a show of hands vote.

Adjournment 10:52.

Respectfully submitted,

Frances Geisel

Recording Secretary

Community Service (Peg Harding) Report.

Well, it's fall, again, but completely different from the fall of 2019! It's been one year and so many things have occurred in 365 days. Our schools are different, our church services are different, our businesses are different, and our very lives are different. Many of us have lost loved ones in this past last year and many of us have been left alone through this pandemic.

Those of us who have been volunteering in nursing homes, hospitals, prisons, schools, churches, 4H, and many other places that we have loved to give our time and talent, have now been told to stay away. Where does that leave us? Our collection baskets that were usually filled during our quarterly PASR Butler Chapter luncheons aren't even available. Manufacturers' coupons can't be sent to the military overseas commissaries, because of COVID and

other items for collection have been stopped for the time being.

As your Community Service chair, I don't know when our collections will resume, but I know we are all thinking about helping our fellow members in other ways. Send cards to our "shut-ins", call them, pray for our troops, our families, our neighbors, and then keep yourself busy by using your "time, talents, and treasures"! I'm reading, watching old classic movies, calling my family and friends, making lap blankets for my church, going to doctors' appointments, trying to clean my house, walking in the morning, and just keeping my mind and body active. We'll get through this pandemic and have our luncheons, again! Until then, know that we are thinking of you and hoping for a better 2021!

SSMHF (Ruth Scott) Report:

Center Avenue School is not in need of clothing at this time. What they could really use are **\$10 Gift Cards from Walmart or Target.** They use the gift cards for a reward or incentive such as an activity or a change in behavior. **I will be at Christ Community United Methodist Church on Duffy Road, where we were meeting for our luncheons, on Friday, December 11 from 10 a.m. to 12 noon** at the parking lot in the rear of the church. I drive a blue Jeep Renegade. If you would like to purchase a gift card that is fine. If you prefer for me to purchase the gift card for you, I would prefer cash for the amount you would like me to purchase.

This is a very important program at the school and they have found it to be very successful. If you cannot come on December 11 you may mail me a gift card **\$10 Gift Cards from Walmart or Target** or send cash to my home address at Ruth Scott, 221 E. Muntz Avenue, Butler PA 16001. I will need your donation to reach me no later than December 11. Thank you all for your help in this very worthwhile program.

Cards of Cheer

Audrey Gerlach
48 Marwood Rd, Apt. 1205
Cabot, PA 16023

Mary Ann Martsof
New Haven Court at Clearview
100 New Haven Lane
Birch – Room 105
Butler, PA 16001

Upcoming Dates

Exec. Board: Thurs, Feb 4, at 10:00
Gen Membership: Wed- March 24, at noon
Exec. Board: Thurs, April 8, at 10:00
Gen Membership: Wed, May 26, at noon
Exec. Board: Thurs, Aug 5, 2021 at 10:00
Gen Membership: Wed, Sept 22, at noon
Exec. Board: Thurs, Oct 21, at 10:00
Gen Membership: Wed, Dec 8

Topic: PASR Butler General
Membership Meeting
Time: Dec 9, 2020 12:00 PM Eastern
Join Zoom Meeting
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84351952970?pwd=ZmZBOVhiZjFkQzFhNTBvaDhhNUI0dz09>
Meeting ID: 843 5195 2970
Passcode: 126107



When it is safe to do so, we expect to again meet at our customary place
Christ Community Methodist Church, 205 N. Duffy Road, Butler, PA 16001



The September issue of *Journey* has supportive information on using Zoom. It is available online at www.pasrbutler.org

On the right side of the front page, find **Quick Links**.

Click on **Journey Sept 2020**. When that opens, scroll down to pages 6-9. Zoom is easy when you see what to do. Please give it a try and join in on December 9.

NOTE from Region 8 Director, Mary K. Davis:

I want to thank Barry Nelson for agreeing to be our region L/PEC chair. We are still in need of region chairs for Community Service, Membership, Retirement Planning, and SSMHF Region 8 members (that's us!!!) are needed to step up and take on one of these positions. Our region is also due to elect new officers by the end of the year. Please let me know if there is anybody willing to run for Director or Director-Elect. If not, all positions will remain the same until we meet again



IMPORTANT PASR BUTLER ELECTION INFORMATION

Our PASR Butler By-laws specifically state that a president and president-elect shall not be eligible to succeed themselves. The treasurer and secretary may succeed themselves. It also says that officers shall continue in office until their successors have been elected. This is all from Article VII – Election of Officers. The entire document is available on the website under Member Resources.

We currently have no president-elect. December marks the end of my two-year term as your president. We are not meeting in person and therefore can't hold an election as prescribed in our By-Laws. I checked with our state

office for guidance in how to handle this situation and discussed it with our Exec. Board.

Here is the plan.

1. First there is need for a motion to set aside the By-Laws only at this meeting and only for purposes of an online election. The vote will be a voiced vote, yea and nay. This will accommodate those on and not on camera.

2. Then, assuming the vote passes, the current core slate of officers will be stated:

- President – Polly Shaw
 - Immediate Past Pres – Peg Harding
 - Recording Secretary – Fran Geisel
 - Treasurer – James Huemme
 - Asst. Treasurer – Joanne Nolsheim
- A voice vote to elect will be taken.

All other members of the PASR Butler Exec. Board will continue serving. Note that we need a president-elect.

While it technically is possible to just continue in office until we can finally meet in person, I am more comfortable in having the confirmation of the membership so that I can continue in this position of leadership. Our current plan will ensure the stability of our Butler Chapter.



Scams Against Seniors

Snake oil salesmen and sideshow barkers were a threat to our grandparents' safety. We have modern dangers. I attended a PASR Zoom program that outlines ten outrageous but common scans against seniors today. Any of us could unsuspectingly fall victim to any of these if we are not vigilant.

The information presented comes from David Shallcross of the Senior Protection Unit (formerly Elder Abuse Unit) under the office of the PA State Attorney, Josh Shapiro. The role of this office is multi-faceted, including health care, protecting from frauds & scams, as well as regular consumer complaints. They handle both civil and criminal sides of problems. They offer these TEN SCANS AGAINST SENIORS.

10. CHECK FRAUD – Many seniors prefer to pay bills by check rather than electronic means. This is fine but be sure to compare monthly your check register/stubs against the statement to see that the correct amount was paid. Did anyone add 1 in front to make it \$1,628 instead of just \$628? Today there are special pens available with ink that bonds to the paper so that it can't be changed in an attempted check fraud.

When you order checks, get ones with watermark security. Limit the amount of information preprinted on the check. Use your first initial rather than full first name. "D" instead of Donna, David, Dennis, or Donald. Someone

trying to cheat might not really know your full name, so don't hand it to them. Do not list your telephone number. If some transaction requires it, then write it in on just that check. If you accept a check payment from someone you don't know, wait ten days for it to clear. For example, someone writes you a check for \$650 instead of \$500, saying they got mixed up. They want you to just give them \$150 cash for the overpayment. Let that check clear first or you could be out everything. Use great caution when dealing with people you don't know.

9. SWEETHEART SWINDLE – These romance scams can happen through dating sites and social media platforms. The scammer establishes a relationship with the target over time, but before meeting in person, they claim to need money for transportation or a medical necessity, etc. It has to be paid before the meeting – which never comes. Some of these scammers carry this on for a year to establish trust. They supply pictures and invent a background to make them seem real. Investigators have found many situations where a scammer used the same pictures with a variety of targets – none of whom wanted to believe that the relationship wasn't real.

8. INVESTMENT SCAMS – All sorts of real looking documentation can be created on home computers that create the illusion that a dummy account is real. The scammer provides all this with the intention of the target paying. David Shallcross

described a situation where a senior was found to have paid out several hundred thousand dollars in “small” amounts of \$20,000 or \$30,000 each time. The man was about to lose his house when his son was notified and legal steps were taken to protect what the man had left. The aging man had believed the shark because he seemed sincere and showed documents. It was all fake.

7. FRONT DOOR FRAUD -First of all, use your peephole or a window to see who is outside. If you don't know them, talk through the door or open the window slightly, but don't open it to strangers. If it is a utility workman in a uniform, look for the official vehicle parked nearby. Ask to see the driver's license to compare the name and photo with the company ID being shown. If someone is trying to sell something, ask for a solicitation permit. Don't sign up; don't prepay for anything. Don't show your utility bill if someone is trying to get you to change providers and wants to show you what you will save. The hard luck story may sound real about why the person is trying to sell magazine subscriptions. No!

6. MEDICAL ALERT SYSTEM – Is the vendor legitimate? There certainly are trustworthy companies in this field. There are also some who may say that it is free, but actually only the necklace is free. There could be many additional charges for the actual transponder, the monthly service fee, and so forth. Check with your doctor about credible vendors.

5. CHARITY SOLICITATION – An organization may sound legitimate, but is the caller actually representing that group? A lot of charities hire by contract for others to solicit but 60%, 70% even 80% may go to the soliciting group not the charity. See about directly mailing a check to the organization so that you know that all your donation goes to them. Check with the Better Business Bureau or the PA Dept. of Charities Bureau.

Under the PA Dept of State: The Bureau of Corporations and Charitable Organizations administers the state's charitable solicitation law. It also maintains registration and financial information on over 13,000 charities soliciting in the Commonwealth, as well as more than 450 professional solicitors and fundraising counsels. <https://www.dos.pa.gov/BusinessCharities/Charities/Pages/default.aspx>

4. GOVERNMENT OR BANKING IMPERSONATOR -They call with threatening messages about some sort of legal action against you. First of all, the IRS works by US Mail, and must notify you by mail three times. They don't make threatening phone calls. Understand that caller ID can be faked so it may look like a local call. A positive solution is to let the answering machine answer for you. Picking up is then your choice. Talk to your cell provider about getting a screening program that identifies scam calls in the caller ID. Then, don't answer them. “If the phone is ringing, don't go singing” is a way of cautioning not

to give out personal info if you didn't make the call. Use the customer service number that is on every credit card and statement. Then you have assurance about who is on the line.

3. **HEALTH CARE SCAMS** – An online web doctor may be a start if you have some sort of symptoms, but your best move is to talk to your own doctor. Online information may not be up-to-date or just not true, possibly because they want to sell you something.

There is also medical identify theft. After procedures or special tests, you will receive a statement from your insurance provider. Always read the explanation of benefits. Most likely, all is fine, but it if says you had a root canal but you didn't, then call. That is fraud by identify theft against your insurance provider. Alert them.

2. **SWEEPSTAKES SCAMS** – If a caller says that you won but you have to pay taxes and fees before you receive the prize, that is illegal. If you didn't enter, then you didn't win. You must buy the ticket; if they send you a ticket and say you won, you didn't. Publisher's Clearing House really does show up at the winner's house with the balloons and the TV camera. If you don't see that outside, then you didn't win.

1. **GRANDPARENT SCAM** – Scammers love social media. If you post it, they can learn your dog's name; family names; where you vacation. They can and do research you to get background info. Then you get a call from a someone claiming to be a grandson you haven't seen in

years, saying they are in trouble and need money. He might make comments that mention family things that you think only he could know. First of all, **stop and send no money**. Call other family members and find out where that grandson is. Check it out. It is recommended that the family have a safe word. Never post it or tell others. See if the "lost" person knows that safe word.

PSERS SMART SAFETY TIP

I became a member of PSERS (PA School Employees' Retirement System) in the 1970s. At that time I named my husband as my beneficiary and am still married to him, so I felt secure in my arrangements. But I still checked because there are payment options. Are you really sure that you know now what you chose a few decades ago???

A relative of one of our PASR Butler members had the unfortunate surprise of discovering that the retirement option that was chosen several decades ago did not provide for a continuing income today for the surviving spouse. A most RUDE awakening to facts.

It's time to be sure. Circumstances change. Family members may pass away. The option chosen then may not be your preference now.

It is possible to check online

www.psers.pa.gov

You need to know your PSERS ID. If you don't, they will US mail it to you.

PSERS
5 N. 5th Street
Harrisburg, PA 17101 -1905
Toll free: 1.888.773.7748

Membership Application		Phone	Date of birth
P A S R Pennsylvania Association of School Retirees 878 Century Drive Mechanicsburg, PA 17055-4375	() -	/ /	
	E-mail address	Retirement date & years of service	
Please PRINT name/address below:	Are you a member of a local PASR chapter? If yes, which one?	___/___/___ ___ YOS	
		School District from which you retired	
	Please select your membership option. Make check payable to: PASR <input type="checkbox"/> Annual Membership (<i>school retiree</i>) - \$60.00 <input type="checkbox"/> Associate Membership (<i>non-school retiree</i>) \$60.00 <input type="checkbox"/> Life Membership Dues - \$700.00		

BUTLER COUNTY CHAPTER

NAME _____ e-mail address _____

ADDRESS _____

TELEPHONE NO. _____ SCHOOL DISTRICT _____

SPOUSE'S NAME _____

DUES: _____ Local - \$10.00 _____ State - \$60.00

 _____ Local Life - \$150.00 _____ State Life - \$700.00

(State Life can be paid in two years at \$350.00 per year)

Please make check payable to Butler County PASR and mail to: Jim Huemme
 119 Shanor Heights Butler, PA 16001

December Program Bios

Anne Phipps has been singing for as long as she can remember, and received her first harp as a gift some 30 years ago when it was presented to her by the members of 2 churches that her husband John was serving in the Meadville, PA area. That first harp was a Paraguayan harp that the church members thought she "could learn to play" for them. The purchase of the harp was part of a mission fund-raising effort to start the Methodist Church in the country of Paraguay, where the harp is the national instrument. Though she has a background in music and has taught in both public and

private schools and in higher education, she has never had a harp lesson. While she still has that first harp, the harp she will play for you is a Dusty Strings lever harp.

John Phipps has been a pastor in the United Methodist Church for 37 years, and currently serves as the senior pastor at Concord United Methodist Church in Beaver Falls, PA. For years he has played guitar as a past-time, mostly for just his own personal enjoyment. Anne and John have 3 grown children and 4 grandchildren. Anne’s brother, **Jim Melnick**, is retired from government and private sector work as an intelligence affairs analyst, and has written several books. Playing the violin has always been a hobby, and in retirement, he enjoys playing with both a Colonial and Irish band in the Fredericksburg, VA area.



If you move, or change phone numbers or email, please be sure to tell our membership chair, Sharon Kline, elsie60@zoominternet.net. It is essential that we have accurate records and know how to contact you!
505 Stoneridge Blvd. Butler, PA 16001

PASR TREASURER’S REPORT
July 1- September 30, 2020
James A. Huemme

RECEIPTS:

Local Dues	\$ 90.00
State Dues	120.00
	\$ 210.00

EXPENSES:

PASR	\$ 60.00
Office	43.74
Minuteman Press	303.27
Postmaster	75.45
Memorial Books (3)	90.00
	\$ 563.46

Balance

June 30, 2020	\$ 1,882.49
Receipts	+ 210.00
	2,092.49
Expenses	- 563.46
	1,529.03
Checkbook Balance	1,529.03
Savings	9,304.77
	\$10,833.80
TOTAL FUNDS	\$10,833.80

PASR, Butler Chapter

Mary K Davis

505 Kenlee Dr.

Renfrew, PA 16053

**Pre sort STD
Postage Pd.
Per #510
Butler, PA
16001**

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

DATED MATERIAL

PASR

Pennsylvania Association of School Retirees



Wednesday, December 9, 2020 Program

The program by Anne and John Phipps will be primarily a compilation of Christmas carols, and sacred and secular Christmas music to help you get in the spirit of the holiday season. Included will be such favorites as *Joy to the World*, *Silent Night* and *White Christmas*. (See pp 10-11 for bio.)

