

MONTCO-PSEA RETIRED *NEWSLINE*

***From The President's Pen -
by Carl Rieffanaugh, MontCo PSEA-R***

Autumn has arrived and a new school year starts. But we're not part of it! Welcome new retirees to an exciting voyage that, hopefully, gives you a chance to renew, relax and smile. You are going to find that there's so much to do -- and so little time. And welcome to those already retired. How many of us still wonder how we ever had time to work?!

We've been lucky. Although Governor Shapiro surprised us with a voucher incentive, our collective voice was able to stop it. Be sure to reach out to your legislator to offer thanks if their vote was in our favor; and more importantly, reach out if your legislator turned in the wrong vote and share why their thoughts are incorrect (like vouchers don't offer low-income people much assistance to attend the elite private schools the pro-voucher people mention). Remember, November 7 is election day. Be sure to vote by mail or in person – local school board control rests in our hands.

One of my goals as your President is to have many activities for retired MontCo-Retired members. Sue Hanna organized another successful summer legislative breakfast; thank you Sue! And thank you Ellie for taking reservations.

Now some save the dates – Wednesday, November 8 is the Mideastern Region Retired combined luncheon. At the luncheon, you will be asked to vote for delegates to the April 8-9, 2024 PSEA-Retired House of Delegates. And yes, I do plan to run for a second term as PSEA-Retired Vice President. **You will find the luncheon announcement/return form at the end of this newsletter!**

Please note that other than our Fall and Spring newsletters, all Montgomery County PSEA-Retired information is sent via email – subject line “MontCo/PSEA-Retired. Please be sure to add your email to your profile on the PSEA website.

As I have said in previous issues, we need assistance with committees and would like to hear your ideas for workshops or trips. Please email me at crieffan@gmail.com your name and the committee you would like to assist with or your name and the idea you have that you think would be beneficial to fellow Montgomery County PSEA-Retired members. I look forward to hearing from you.

In closing, thank you for allowing me to serve as your President. I look forward to seeing you at our future activities. Be healthy.

Carl

PSEA-RETIRED HOUSE OF DELEGATES

The PSEA-Retired House of Delegates will be held in Harrisburg on Monday and Tuesday, April 8-9, 2024. Pursuant to PSEA-Retired Constitution and By Laws, retired regions are required to elect delegates in the prior fall. At the House of Delegates, election of PSEA-Retired officers and assorted chairs will take place. At present, Montgomery County-Retired is entitled to twenty delegates. To have your name placed on the ballot to be a delegate, please forward your name and email address (via email or usps – no phone calls will be accepted) to Ellie Boehner, 461 Centennial Street, Schwenksville, PA 19473 or eboehner@aol.com **BEFORE** October 25, 2023. The election of delegates will occur at the MER-Retired luncheon on November 8, 2023.

Susan K. Castle Memorial Scholarship

Montgomery County PSEA Retired enjoyed a lovely lunch at the William Penn Inn in mid-May. The Susan K Castle Memorial Scholarship committee would like to say thank you to all those who shared donations in the piggy banks on the tables, as well as funds sent in with the luncheon registrations. The scholarship fund raised \$715.00.

The committee also invites our scholarship winners for the year, along with their guests, to the luncheon. The winners are afforded the opportunity to address the retirees, and it is always positive to hear their remarks. What remarkable young people they are!

Not everyone is able to join us. The 2022-23 scholarship winners who were able to attend and who spoke were: Nya Cherry and Rebecca Berglund. We also had written remarks from Alyssa Galaban.

June 15th marks the deadline for those interested in applying for a scholarship. To be eligible to apply, you need to have graduated from a public high school in Bucks or Montgomery County. In addition, the college student must be going into their junior or rising senior year in their undergraduate school, and their declared major must be education with a goal to work in public education. To apply, contact Carol Cohen at carolco328@gmail.com. Please keep this scholarship in mind if you know a future educator who meets our criteria.

Our thanks again to those who graciously donated to the scholarship fund and to the winners who joined us at the spring luncheon.

Carol Cohen, Diana Kernop - Co-Chairs.

Montgomery County PSEA-Retired

Officers:

President - Carl Rieffanaugh

Past President - Fred Dugan

Vice-President - Jules Mermelstein

Secretary - Karen Anderson

Treasurer - Anne Pass

Newsline Editor - Gary Turetsky

PACE UPDATE

Sue Hanna, PACE Liaison

Donate to PACE

The PACE year begins in September so we will be making contributions anew. Last year, PSEA-Retired members donated over \$250,000 to PACE! Elections in 2024 are very important ones, both statewide and national. These monies can help with campaigns of candidates who are pro-public schools and pro-public education. Consider donating not only to PACE for state elections but also to the NEA Fund for federal elections, such as the presidential election in 2024. It's easy to donate. Go to www.psea.org/PACE to contribute to PACE and to www.NEAFund.org to contribute to the NEA Fund for Children and Education.

Member Benefits Update:

There will be a virtual workshop on the HOP supplemental benefits plans at 10AM on September 27, followed by a virtual workshop on Medicare beginning at 10AM on September 29. Watch for an email soon with the links to attend these workshops virtually.

Also, for those interested in applying for or renewing their BJ's wholesale club membership, the offer information/application will be sent out shortly. Watch for that email!

Thank you,
Judy Morgitan, Member Benefits
Chair.

Annual Summer Legislative Breakfast

Montco-PSEA Retired held its annual legislative breakfast at Franconia Heritage Banquet Center on Friday July 28th and it was well attended. Members got to hear from many of the state representatives in Montgomery County about how they are legislating and voting on issues of concern to educators, like public education funding, COLAs, and vouchers. We were fortunate to hear from the following who accepted our invitations:

Representative Joe Webster of the 150th District; Representative Joe Ciresi from the 146th District; Representative Ben Sanchez of the 153rd District; Representative Tim Briggs, District 149; Gillian Ladley, District Office Director for Rep. Steve Malagari, 53rd District; Rafia Razzak, District Office Director for State Rep. Melissa Cerrato of the 151st District; and Michael Asch on behalf of Democratic Leader Matt Bradford of the 70th District.

“Autumn is a second spring when every leaf is a flower.”

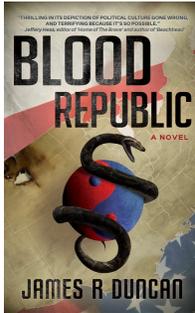
_____Albert Camus

“As long as autumn lasts I shall not have hands, canvas and colors enough to paint the beautiful things I see.”

_____Vincent van Gogh

Book Review.

This edition of Montco-PSEA Retired Newsline features a review of James A. Duncan's political thriller, *Blood Republic*.



The reviewer is our very own Vice-President and legal scholar, Jules Mermelstein, Esq. His original review, somewhat edited for this newsletter, was written at the time the book was published in 2016, a few months before that year's presidential election. As you will see from the review that follows, the book's plot and message is as relevant today as it was some 7 years ago, so if you enjoy reading, and political thrillers are your go to for escapism in retirement, you may want to pick up a copy of *Blood Republic* the next time you are in the book store or library, or at least suggest it as the next book for your book club.

Here's Jules' review:

Imagine an America divided by ideology. Neither side concerned with facts. Each side believing anything they find on the internet that confirms what they already believe. Each side not believing anything they find on the internet that contradicts what they believe. Indeed, one does not need a great deal of imagination for this. Just log onto any social media site and follow the conversation while refusing to get drawn into it, and one can see it. Our civil society seems to be getting less civil and more accepting of fake news that confirms one's beliefs while less accepting of facts that contradict one's beliefs.

Now imagine an America in which conspiracy theories are not only believed, but might actually be real. An America in which the government uses the term *Islamic terrorists* against any group they want to either deny rights to or want to commit acts of violence against. An America in which the belief of alternative conspiracy theories causes people to react with violence against those they perceive to be anti-American.

Imagine the whole country divided, fighting, killing relatives on the “other side”. Yes, another civil war. Now you have the plot of *Blood Republic*, one of the most intriguing, scary, and realistic-to-a-point political thrillers this reviewer has ever read.

Blood Republic was originally published on July 4, 2016, before the results of the 2016 presidential election were known. It revolves around a presidential election in which the Democratic ticket wins the popular vote but there is an apparent tie in the electoral vote as we head into actual voting by the electors. Given the Republican majority in the House of Representatives, it is assumed that if the electors tie, the House will award the Republicans the win.

The Republican side has a slogan of “Make America Great Again” and the Democrats champion a program they call voluntary but if someone elects not to participate they suffer a heavy tax burden for making that choice.

The Republican presidential candidate is an

elderly man with a large mop of blond hair who became famous through television, although as a televangelist, not by hosting a reality television show.

This dystopian novel of what our country may be becoming is eerily realistic, even if one does not buy the conspiracy theories within it. The solution to prevent it is in our power. Without giving away any plot lines, here is what one character says, which might very well be the moral of the story:

...Everyone needs the free will to make mistakes, travel their own path toward truth...With technology evolving exponentially, it won't be long before almost every individual has the ability to destroy us all, so if we don't have faith in a moral code beyond our personal interest, we're done. So it's just about your sincerity to that higher truth, only up to you and you alone.

In short, I highly recommend this novel to anyone with any ideology who is concerned with the level of discourse in the United States today.

JOINT BUCKS-MONTGOMERY FALL MEETING
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2023

SPRING MILL MANOR
171 Jacksonville Rd, IVYLAND 18974
215-675-6000
DOOR WILL BE OPEN AT 11:00 AM

MENU

Penne Pasta Primavera with marinara sauce
Chicken Alexander dipped in egg, mushrooms & asparagus tips,
red peppers & lemon butter sauce
Filet Mignon tips in burgundy wine sauce served over Dutch
noodles

****REGISTER NO LATER THAN NOVEMBER 1st**

Complete the form below and return with your check, mailing
to:

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

COST \$25.00 per person

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: **BUCKS COUNTY PSEA**
RETIRED

JOINT BUCKS-MONTGOMERY FALL MEETING
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2023

SPRING MILL MANOR

NAME/S: _____

Amount enclosed: \$ _____

Choice/s of Entree : _____ **PENNE PASTA PRIMAVERA**

_____ **CHICKEN ALEXANDER**

_____ **FILET MIGNON**