

PARSE *newsletter*

DIRECTORY OF SERVICES

PARSE State Office

2929 Gettysburg Road, Suite 1
Camp Hill, PA 17011

717-731-9522

Toll Free: 1-888-809-7429

Office Phone Hours:

9am – 3pm M-F

Website: www.parseofpa.org

Thomas B. Judge – President
Allan Hansen – Vice President
Vacancy - Treasurer
Vickie Bailey – Secretary

REGIONAL VICE PRESIDENTS

NORTHWEST

Joseph Moliterno: (814) 938-9089

SOUTHWEST

Thomas Buerkle: (724) 836-5412

NORTHEAST

John Quirk: (570) 628-2815

SOUTHEAST

Kathy Beitchman (610) 252-9912

CENTRAL

Carol Moyer: (717) 652-9270

President’s Message

Thomas B. Judge, President

2020 Dues

The 2020 PARSE budget to be presented to the Executive Committee and the Governing Board in September maintains the dues at \$20 per member.

Here’s what your dues allow the State Office and Chapters to provide:

1. Opportunities for members to purchase group dental and vision insurance,
2. Chapter events such as luncheons and speakers,
3. Our Government Relations Advisor’s presence at the Capitol, and
4. A connection between the Office of Administration and the PARSE State Office concerning our health benefits.



Tom Judge

The State Office collects dues for most but not all chapters. If you are a member of Chapter 2-60 Wayne, Pike, Monroe; Chapter 4-50 Montgomery; Chapter 4-60 Philadelphia, Bucks or Chapter 5-20 INDICO (Indiana), the following instructions about paying your 2020 dues do not apply because your chapters do their own dues collection.

2020 Dues Invoices

The State Office requests your assistance to process over 19,000 invoices in a timely manner. The bar-coding on your invoice expedites that process (for the 24 chapters not listed above).

Follow these steps, please:

1. In late September the State Office will send a mailing file to our printer and an invoice will be mailed to most members in early October.
2. Each invoice will be bar-coded with your

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unique PARSE member number. The bar code is essential for the scanning process we now use.

3. If you send a check without the bar-coded invoice, we must manually look up your record to enter your dues payment. This is time consuming and leads to errors.
4. If both you and your spouse/partner receive an invoice, please return both invoices and one check for \$40 to pay both dues. The single check for \$40 also saves time when scanning checks for deposit to the bank.
5. If you send us one invoice and a check for \$40, we must interrupt the scanning process to look up your spouse/partner to apply dues to the spouse's/partner's record.

Central Penn 1-20 Instructions for Dues Invoices

Dues invoices for Central-Penn Chapter 1-20 members will be mailed in early November to give the State Office time to process invoices from other chapters before the large volume for Chapter 1-20 begins to arrive. We ask Central Penn Chapter members to be patient and pay your dues only after your invoices arrive in early November.

On-Line Dues Payments

As requested by many members and beginning with your 2020 dues, you will have the opportunity to pay your dues online! This will be available only for the chapters for whom the State Office collects dues.

Each invoice will have a link to a secure site. Your PARSE Member ID (found on the invoice) will allow you to retrieve your information and pay your dues using a debit or credit card. There will be a \$1 fee for this service, so the cost of dues will be \$21 for each member. Online payment is a voluntary option like the process you use for paying other bills online. It also reduces the volume of invoices to be processed at the State Office. Note: This is

an optional payment method and members are not required to use this payment method.

We hope to add an online application feature in the future.

SERS Meeting

The Pennsylvania State Employees Retirement System, or SERS, ended sharing the names and addresses of retirees with PARSE in 2008. Multiple attempts to obtain this information have been unsuccessful. PARSE believes that many retirees would take advantage of the insurances offered if they knew about PARSE. The State Office has not abandoned this initiative.

At an April 22 meeting at SERS on April 22, which the Executive Director of SERS, Terrill Sanchez, and other SERS staff attended, I reviewed the history of PARSE, our non-profit status and our desire to work with SERS to help retirees obtain dental and vision care which they lose on retirement. I presented two ways of working with SERS while maintaining confidentiality for SERS members: the "Blind Mailing Concept" and the "Affinity Agreement." SERS staff agreed to look at these options for ways we could work together.

In early June, SERS said no to our request. They agree that PARSE is beneficial to retirees. If they provide a mailing list for PARSE, other organizations might feel entitled to retiree names, addresses, and more information as well.

Dental Insurance – United Concordia

Professional Insurance Services, Inc. (PISI) has begun negotiations with United Concordia for a new contract to replace the current one which ends October 31, 2019. I have requested another multi-year contract (2 to 4 years) with no premium increase. We anticipate a proposal from PISI-United Concordia in mid-August to provide time for review and final approval by the Governing Board.

Note: All current policies you have will continue as we negotiate a new contract with United Concordia. The terms of a new contract will apply only when you renew your insurance.

Capitol Hill Update

By John E. Baughman, Ph. D., PARSE Government Relations Advisor

2019-2020 Budget

The Pennsylvania Constitution mandates that the Commonwealth budget for the fiscal year 2019-2020 be completed by 12:01 a.m. on July 2019. As of the date of writing (June 27, 2019) budget legislation has not passed, and Governor Wolf has not signed, a budget for 2019-2020.

Much of the legislative activity between now and the summer recess will be focused on these budget activities. In past years the passage of the budget was contentious and difficult to pass before the deadline. This year, legislators agree, that passage of the budget (proposed \$34.1 billion) will progress smoothly and should be completed on time because of a couple of factors:

- Governor Wolf is not proposing a broad-based tax increase that the Republicans adamantly oppose;
- Commonwealth revenues are running 3% ahead of projections at \$828 million (largely due to gaming and internet sales tax); and
- Certain controversial issues like the Marcellus Shale extraction tax are to be handled outside the budget process.

While there will be differences to be settled, they seem manageable and not likely to hold up final passage.

One of the items in the budget that is of critical interest to the stability of the retirement funds is the Commonwealth's commitment to paying its required contribution to the funds. In the past, the failure to make this contribution was a significant factor in causing the large unfunded liability in the funds. The 2019-20 contribution will amount to 10%.

Public Employee Pensions

With the passage of Act 5 of 2017, which deals with public employee pensions, most of the attention was given to establishing a 401k type of pension for public employees. This Act also established the Public Pension Management and Asset Investment Review Commission. The recommendations of the Commission's Report call for numerous and far-reaching changes to the way funds are invested.

Recommendations suggest that the costs and benefits of investments be closely examined:

- Scrutiny of the actual performance of the investments; and
- Assessment and analysis of investments to determine if they are performing well in relation to the overall financial markets.

All in all, the Commission Report proposed that the investments could be generating greater returns and be more transparent. Several bills will be proposed in this session in relation to these recommendations.

Property Tax Elimination

Other legislation likely to be considered in this session are several different versions of property tax elimination. Generally, most people are supportive of property tax elimination, until they look at the cost. SB 76 (sponsored by Senator Argall), which includes commercial, homestead, and farmstead properties, has a cost of approximately \$14 billion. This would be paid for by a combination of raising the personal income tax and the sales tax. Sensing that there will be difficulty in getting enough votes to pass a bill with that high of a cost, several legislators have proposed bills that include eliminating only the Residential (homestead) Tax. This would have a lower cost of about \$9 billion plus.

CHAPTER TREASURERS

MEMBERS-AT-LARGE

State Office: 888-809-7429

- 1-10 **Blair, Bedford, Huntingdon**
Shirley Kurtz-Flaugh: 814-832-3195
- 1-20 **Central Penn**
Jan Moran: 717-763-5515
- 1-25 **Franklin**
Bonnie McMullen: 717-860-1605
- 1-27 **Fulton**
Barbara Fischer: 717-294-3693
- 1-30 **Lancaster, Lebanon**
Joan Matterness: 717-392-4906
- 1-40 **Mt. Nittany**
Mary Alice Miller: 814-349-5475
- 1-50 **MUNS**
Sally Kobus: 570-524-0635
- 2-10 **Endless Mountains**
Dianne Burman: 570-756-2525
- 2-20 **Lackawanna, Wyoming**
Christopher Doherty: 570-521-4549
- 2-30 **Luzerne, Columbia**
Robert Berkey: 570-239-0908
- 2-50 **Schuylkill, Carbon**
John Quirk: 570-628-2815
- 2-60 **Wayne, Pike, Monroe**
Claudia Le Vasseur: 570-937-9093
- 3-10 **Erie**
Anita Locanto: 814-460-5010
- 3-20 **Jefferson, Clearfield**
Joe Moliterno (acting): 814-938-9089
- 3-27 **Crawford**
Kathryn W Parks: 814-337-0673
- 3-30 **McKean, Potter, Cameron, Elk**
Diana Ewing: 814-778-5182
- 3-40 **Venango, Clarion, Mercer**
Richard Supak: 814-437-3385
- 3-50 **Barton Schuler (Warren, Forest)**
Carolyn Moynihan: 716-720-1527
- 4-10 **Berks, Lehigh, Northampton**
Muriel Brookins: 215-669-2493
- 4-30 **Delaware, Chester**
Roxanna Liberace: 610-678-3745
- 4-50 **Montgomery**
Doll Byrd: 610-584-5035
- 4-60 **Philadelphia, Bucks**
Ed Finfer: 215-244-1330
- 5-10 **Cambria, Somerset**
Frances Skala: 814-535-4380
- 5-20 **Indico**
Richard Roberts: 724-465-5295
- 5-30 **West SI-CO**
Xina Matuza: 724-327-0826
- 5-40 **West Penn**
Georgia Manns: 412-672-8708
- 5-50 **Laurel Highlands**
Carol Kolesko: 814-893-5676

Insurance by the Numbers

“How many members use the dental and vision insurance programs?” is a frequent question from many PARSE members to State and local chapter officers.

PARSE has worked with Professional Insurance Services, Inc. (PISI) for more than 25 years to obtain excellent coverage at reasonable rates. With over 60% of PARSE members are using the dental insurance and 50% using the vision insurance benefits, we have good confidence in the insurance products offered.

The chart below shows the number of contracts currently active through PISI. Dental insurance is with United Concordia and vision, with Davis Vision.

	<i>United Concordia Dental</i>	<i>Davis Vision Standard Plan</i>	<i>Davis Vision Enhanced Plan</i>
Individual	6,105	2,135	2,132
2-Party	4,845	2,057	2,021
Family	462	170	257

If you have not investigated the insurance programs and want more information, please call PISI at 1-800-382-1352 or PARSE at 1-888-809-7429.

Sam’s Club Certificates

As reported in our Spring 2019 newsletter, William Dunn, Chair of the PARSE Benefits Committee, expected a response to his inquiries to Sam’s Club about renewing the Sam’s Club discount certificates for PARSE members in mid-March. Sam’s Club responded to Mr. Dunn after the Spring 2019 newsletter had gone to press.

Sam’s Club has decided not to renew the certificate at this time. PARSE members used the certificates predominately used for renewals. Sam’s Club prefers that the program attract new members, and the number of new memberships through PARSE did not meet their expectations.

We will keep our membership informed of any changes regarding our connection with Sam’s Club.

VISIT YOUR LEGISLATOR

With the PA General Assembly members on summer break, now is a good time to visit your state senator or representative in the local district office. Here are some tips to make your visit as effective as possible.

Arrange the Visit

- Telephone or email your local legislator and arrange for a meeting of 15 minutes. Explain the issue you wish to discuss on your visit. Discuss no more than two issues for your visit.
- If anyone is joining you in the visit, inform the staff of the name(s).
- Confirm the visit by letter soon after arranging the appointment and then again by phone the day before the visit.

Prepare for the Visit

- Do research on the issue you will discuss:
 - What are the facts and figures that support and oppose your position on the issue?
 - Has your legislator taken a position on your issue?
 - Have any newspapers across the state published stories or written editorials about your issue?
 - Do you have two or more stories about how the issue is impacting constituents in the district?
- Do research on your legislator:
 - What is your legislator's professional background?
 - How long has your legislator held the current position?
 - What are the geographic boundaries of the district?
 - On what committees does your legislator serve?
 - Do any of these committees relate to your issue of interest?
- Define the objective for your visit:
 - What are the top three important points for you on this issue?

- Who will be the spokesperson if you are in a group?
- Decide what do you want your legislator to do because of your visit.
- Prepare a **leave-behind** packet that includes the names and contact information of folks in your group, a position paper with facts and figures that support your position, and articles and/or editorials from newspapers across the Commonwealth on the issue.

The Visit Itself

- Arrive 5 to 10 minutes ahead of time for your appointment. If the schedule has changed and you meet with staff, follow your plans.
- Introduce yourself and others in your group and thank the legislator for meeting with you. Always be cordial. Keep notes on who was present and what was said. Remind him/her that you vote in both primary and general elections.
- Follow your plan for the visit. If you don't know how to respond to a question, tell the legislator you don't know and will get back him/her.
- Conclude the meeting on time. Summarize your position, be clear about what you expect because of your visit, present the **leave-behind** packet to the legislator, and thank her/him for the time.

After the Visit

- Within one week of your visit, send a thank you letter that summarizes the main points. Respond to the "I don't know" questions.
- Track your legislator's position on the issue.

A directory of state legislators is on the PARSE website, parseofpa.org, under the Legislative Activity/Government Relations Advisor link. Should you need further assistance in finding contact information on your state legislators, contact the PARSE State Office at 1-888-809-7429.

IMPORTANT GENERAL ELECTION DATES
Last Day To Register **Mon., Oct. 7, 2019**
Election Day **Tue., Nov. 5, 2019**

PARSE *Calendar of Events at State Office*

- September 2, 2019: Labor Day, State Office Closed
September 10, 2019: Executive Committee Meeting
September 10 & 11, 2019: Governing Board Meeting,
Clarion Hotel & Conference Center,
New Cumberland, PA
October 14, 2019: Columbus Day, State Office Closed
November 11, 2019: Veterans Day, State Office Closed
November 12, 2019: Executive Committee Meeting
November 28 & 29, 2019: Thanksgiving Holiday, State Office Closed
December 25, 2019: Christmas Holiday, State Office Closed
January 1, 2020: New Year's Day, State Office Closed
January 14, 2020: Executive Committee Meeting
January 20, 2020: Martin Luther King Day, State Office Closed

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