

TSRA NEWSLETTER

Publication of the Textron Systems Retirees Association

Volume 2017, No. 3

www.tsretirees.org

Meet our new President, Len Epstein



Joel Bernstein, outgoing TSRA President, welcomes incoming TSRA President Len Epstein

My name is Len (Leonard) Epstein. I was elected in April by the Board of Directors to be the President of the TSRA Board.

Some of you don't know me. I worked at AVCO and, for a short time, Textron from 1964 to 1985. I left Textron to seek my fortune and worked at Draper Laboratory in Cambridge until my retirement in 2014. I became reacquainted with Textron at the time of the 50th Anniversary celebration and joined TSRA shortly thereafter.

I was a member of the TSRA Board of Directors from 2009 through 2013 and was chairman of the Social and Membership and Activities Committee (MAC).

I am pleased that the Board of Directors selected me to be the next President of TSRA and will work hard to fill the shoes of those who have preceded me.

TSRA

Textron Systems is currently undergoing numerous changes, some of which will undoubtedly affect our future. However, it is important to note that our affiliation with TS in no way affects our existence as

a viable, independent not-for-profit organization. We have in the past, and will continue in the future, to have an excellent working relationship with both Textron Systems and the parent Corporation. Textron staff have always been open and freely share their knowledge regarding retirement matters and we have had members of both organizations as guests at prior TSRA events. In addition, we have been invited to and supported TS internal benefits meetings with employees to educate them on TSRA.

My goals as President

In the past TSRA has depended on an influx of new members to keep the organization growing and to keep the average age stable. Looking into the future, that may be a challenge as the new member rate is dropping due to the reductions in TS employment.

For us to continue as an organization, we must double our efforts to retain our current membership. To accomplish this most effectively, we need to know what things the membership would like TSRA to provide.

(continued on next page)

ALSO INCLUDED IN THIS ISSUE

	Page
2017 Annual Spring Luncheon Highlights	3
Tax Tips for Retirees	4
Medicare Benefits of Which You May Not Be Aware	4
2017 John J. Mahoney Golf Tournament	7
Welcome New Members	7
Upcoming Events	7
In Memoriam	7

Meet Our New President, Len Epstein (continued from page 1)

We have a mix of retirees who reside in close proximity to Wilmington, MA and have provided numerous events so that members can meet socially on a regular basis throughout the year. However, there are roughly 500 members (not including spouses or significant others). There are well over 100 members who are not within easy commute of the Eastern Massachusetts area. Also, not all of the local members are able to travel to events.

My goals are twofold: 1) To continue to provide local events of interest to those members who can and wish to attend, and 2) To improve our communications and offerings to those members who are out of commuting reach. Possibilities range from coordinating events in clusters of retirees outside the commute range; this includes Cape Cod, New Hampshire, Florida, Maine, and California, where there are small clusters of retirees. Also, we are exploring the use of social media to try to facilitate direct social contact between TSRA members so they can catch up with one another since retirement.

We need your input

For us to provide the types of services you want and enjoy, we need your help. We need you to tell us what you like about TSRA so we can continue those features. Likewise, we need you tell us what additional things TSRA might do to make your life as a retiree more fulfilling whether it be educational, social, or helping you contact other TSRA members. The ways to contact us are easy. First, there is the website at www.tsretirees.org. From the top menu, select "about us", then "contact". This will take you to a list of people to contact depending on your need. It starts with President and lists the various committees. By selecting one of these options, it will open your e-mail application so you can type away. Second, if you don't use the computer or don't have e-mail, drop us a note or write us a letter and send it to TSRA, P.O. Box 732, Framingham, MA 01701. That's the same address for membership renewal.

To help the process, let me briefly remind you of the present TSRA committees.

Social – This committee, chaired by **Joe Martino**, is responsible for the planning and execution of all of our social events. These include member luncheons, matinee theater, golf tournament (aided by **Art Dunford**), minor league baseball and BBQ, and a lobster outing and boat ride at Cape Cod. Also, in past years, we have toured a winery, taken a Boston Duck Tour, and taken a boat ride to the Isle of Shoals.

Membership – **Dom LaRosa** chairs this committee that is responsible for maintaining accurate membership records, collecting annual dues, and keeping track of those members and spouses who have passed on.

Retirement Benefits – Chaired by **Mark Kovacs**, this committee provides educational material regarding retirement benefits both from Textron and the government. Most of these products are published in our newsletters and available on our website. This committee can also assist in directing you to both government sites and providing contact information to the Textron benefit providers at Fidelity. For your protection, they are not allowed to provide individual specific recommendations.

Communications – This committee, chaired by **Steve Wisotsky**, is responsible for producing our newsletter, maintaining our website, and maintaining the database software we use for keeping track of members and producing mailing lists.

Finance – **Joe Martino** is responsible for overseeing the finance of TSRA. Day-to-day transactions are conducted by our Treasurer, **Bob Ricles**.

Secretary – **Steve Terani** is responsible for creating and maintaining accurate records of all TSRA proceedings. He is also responsible for notifying our members of the corporation for the annual meeting typically conducted before our May luncheon.

(continued on next page)

Meet Our New President, Len Epstein (continued from page 2)

Strategic Planning – This is an ad hoc committee recently formed to provide a five-year road map for TSRA going forward. With all of the changes to TS and the effects on TSRA, this will assist us on directing our efforts in the future.

With all of these activities taking place to maintain a viable organization, I look forward to hearing from you as to how these various components of TSRA can benefit you, our members. Please feel free to contact us with your thoughts.

2017 Annual Spring Luncheon Highlights (Joe Martino)

The annual Spring Luncheon returned to Angelica's Restaurant & Functions in Middleton for the second time on May 18. It was a 95-degree steamer outside but 105 members and guests enjoyed a cool and comfortable afternoon in the Grand Ballroom. The occasion was an opportunity to introduce our newly-elected President, **Len Epstein**, to the membership. Len has served on the Board of Directors in the past and as an association volunteer in various capacities over many years. You've probably enjoyed many of his and **Steve Wisotsky's** expert photographs from our social events in the newsletters and on our website.

A post-lunch highlight was the return of the Trivia Quiz, this time with a broader challenge that added National Parks and general trivia questions to those of AVCO/Textron, the latter spanning 50 years of company history. The total number of questions was 13, a number based on an obscure theory posed by one of our trivia scholars who assured us that an odd count would make it more difficult to achieve a perfect score. Although no proof could be found, it turned out to be true as the resulting four winners were all tied at 11 correct answers: **John Dyer, Gary Jones, Tony Todisco** and **Steve Wisotsky**. The door prizes went to **Sylvia Bonaccorso, Kathy Dattoli, Annette Maranville, Hank McCard** and **Naomi Nelson**.

If you didn't make the Luncheon, you can try your trivia skills at the quiz which will appear in a future newsletter – and maybe disprove the odd-number theory!



Selena Evans and Carol Coombs welcome guests with warm smiles as they arrive at the Luncheon.

Angelica's buffet selections and service were once more excellent. Our own Treasurer **Bob Ricles** was yet again at the Hobby Table exhibiting more of his amazing stained glasswork. A Benefits Table offered helpful retirement information and handout materials. Throughout cocktails and lunch, a continuous slide show featured photos from last year's luncheons, while at the Hobby Table there was a terrific laptop slide presentation of members **Ray Loszewski** and **Mike Considine** on one of their interesting backpack trips through the Grand Canyon. A real nice afternoon.



No autographs, please! (Jim Gorman)

Visit the TSRA Website for more luncheon photos taken by Steve Wisotsky & Len Epstein!

Tax Tip for Retirees

(Mark Kovacs and Joel Bernstein)

The following is an updated version of a previous article which appeared in the Fall 2013 TSRA Newsletter:

Don't forget your Required Minimum Distributions (RMDs)!

For those who turn 70½ this year, there are two traps you can fall into that can cost you extra taxes – a stiff penalty for not taking the RMD on time and possibly paying higher taxes by having two withdrawals in the same year. Plan now to avoid these traps.

You cannot keep retirement funds in your account indefinitely. You generally have to start taking withdrawals from your IRA or retirement plan account (401k) when you reach age 70½. Your withdrawals will be included in your taxable income except for any part that was taxed before (your basis) or that can be received tax-free (such as qualified distributions from designated Roth accounts). Note: If you fail to make the RMD when due, you will have to pay a 50% excise tax on the amount not withdrawn!

The year you reach age 70½ you need to start planning. For that year, you can put off the distribution to April 1 of the following year; however, you'll also have an additional RMD due by December 31 (for the year following the year you turn 70½). To avoid having both of these amounts included in your income for the same year, you can make your first withdrawal by December 31 of the year you turn 70½ instead of waiting until April 1 of the following year.

Example: John reached age 70½ on June 20, 2017. He must receive his 2017 required minimum distribution by April 1, 2018 based on his 2016 year-end balance. John must receive his 2018 required minimum distribution by December 31, 2018, based on his 2017 year-end balance.

If John receives his initial required minimum distribution for 2017 on April 1, 2018, then both his 2017 and 2018 distributions will be included in income on his 2018 income tax return; but, if he receives it by December 31, 2017, then the first is

on the 2017 return and the second is on the 2018 return.

There are many resources to help you with this if you don't have a financial adviser to guide you. The IRS website **Retirement Plans FAQs regarding Required Minimum Distributions** has a good tutorial and a list of FAQs. If you're adventurous and want to calculate your RMD on your own there's a pretty good calculator at **Required Minimum Distribution Calculator – FINRA**. The important thing is to not put this off until you start doing your taxes next year as it could cost you more in taxes than necessary!

The IRS offers detailed information on the Required Minimum Distribution at the following website:

<https://www.irs.gov/retirement-plans/plan-participant-employee/retirement-topics-required-minimum-distributions-rmds>.

Medicare Benefits of Which You May Not Be Aware

(Robert E. Ricles, Esq. *)

There are a number of Medicare benefits that could help you, your family or your friends. Some of the eligibility requirements are complex. Rather than providing all the detailed requirements, this article will provide an overview. If you feel you may be eligible, we suggest setting up an appointment with your local SHINE counselor (1-800-243-4636). SHINE services are free.

PRESCRIPTION ADVANTAGE (PA) – PA is a state-sponsored prescription drug plan for Massachusetts seniors (age 65+) and low-income people with disabilities. It provides secondary coverage to help pay for prescription drugs covered by primary Part D plan or other creditable coverage. There are no monthly premiums. To receive benefits you must be enrolled in a Medicare or creditable prescription drug plan, although you may apply prior to getting coverage. For seniors, your household income cannot exceed 500% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL).

(continued on next page)

Medicare Benefits ... (continued from page 4)

Depending on your income category, PA provides immediate co-pay assistance; or helps pay for prescription drugs once the beneficiary reaches the “donut hole”; or only assists by capping the annual out-of-pocket co-pays and does charge an annual fee. For all income categories, there is an annual out-of-pocket limit on co-pays and PA will pay fully for all covered drugs for the remainder of the calendar year; also, PA members get a Special Enrollment Period (SEP) to enroll or switch Part D coverage once a year outside of the Open Enrollment Period (OEP). You may apply at any time by calling 1-800-243-4636 (press 2), by mail or online at www.prescriptionadvantagemma.org.

EXTRA HELP – Also known as **Limited Income Subsidy (LIS)** is a Federal program that helps Medicare beneficiaries with limited income and assets pay the premium, deductible and co-pays and no coverage gap (“donut hole”) associated with Medicare Part D plans. LIS covers the late enrollment penalty for Part D and provides a continuous monthly SEP. There are two levels of LIS: Full LIS pay zero Part D premiums and deductibles and low co-pays whereas Partial LIS has a sliding scale for premiums reduced deductibles and 15% co-insurance for all drugs.

You must have a Part D plan to get coverage. You apply through the Social Security Administration (SSA) using their printed or online application at www.ssa.gov or call 1-800-772-1213.

MASSHEALTH – MassHealth is the **Massachusetts Medicaid program** – a public health insurance program for low-to-medium income individuals. MassHealth Standard is the most comprehensive MassHealth program whose benefits include (but are not limited to) inpatient hospital service, doctors, chiropractors, vision care, nursing facility care, home health care, adult day health, mental health and substance abuse services. If you also have Medicare (Dual Eligible), MassHealth provides secondary coverage if Massachusetts providers are used and may also pay Medicare premiums, co-pays and deductibles

for non-MassHealth providers if certain income/asset limits are met and you are deemed eligible for LIS. You may reach MassHealth by telephone at 1-800-841-2900 or online at www.mass.gov/eohhs/gov/departments/masshealth

DUAL ELIGIBLE – Dual Eligibles may also get help paying for Part A & B premiums, deductibles, co-insurance and co-pays; if you are in a Medicare Advantage (MA) plan, no deductibles, co-insurance and co-pays (except drugs); and you must enroll in a Part D plan.

COMMONHEALTH – CommonHealth provides health care benefits for people with disabilities whose incomes are too high to be eligible for MassHealth Standard. You must be enrolled in Parts A & B and must pay the Part B premium unless you meet the certain requirements. There are no income or asset limits regardless of age, but if your income is above 150% of the FPL you will pay a monthly premium based on your income. If you are 65+, you must work 40 hrs/month; but the definition of work is extremely liberal – e.g., babysitting, dog walking, meal preparation, etc. at \$1/hr. Under 65 does not have the work requirement.

You are considered dual eligible and the benefits are the same as those of MassHealth. Contact MassHealth or SHINE to apply.

ONE CARE – One Care is a managed care program for some dual-eligible beneficiaries within the ages of 23 to 64. The beneficiary must have Medicare Parts A & B and have MassHealth Standard or CommonHealth. The program combines Medicare/MassHealth services and provides further access to care coordination and support services, including a case manager. There are no co-pays for services or drugs and comprehensive dental services are provided. The program is not available in all counties and plans have provider networks, are offered by private companies and vary by region. Contact MassHealth or SHINE to apply.

(continued on next page)

Medicare Benefits ...
(continued from page 5)

FRAIL ELDER WAIVER (FEW) – FEW is a program for Massachusetts residents who qualify for nursing home care but wish to live at home. You must be 60 years or older, evaluated and deemed “nursing home eligible” by a designated Aging Services Access Point (ASAP), and whose income is at or below 300% of the Federal SSI rate and the asset limit is \$2,000. If you are married, your spouse’s income and assets are “waived” and any of your assets in excess of \$2,000 must be transferred (limited to \$120,000 for spouse) to your spouse. You receive full MassHealth benefits and in-house services such as homemaking, respite care, etc. Contact your local ASAP to apply.

MASSEALTH PERSONAL CARE ATTENDANT (PCA) PROGRAM – PCA helps people aged 65+ with long-term disabilities live independently at home. Mass Health determines the number of hours/week that a PCA is needed. You must be 65+ or, if under 65, you must be on MassHealth or Commonwealth, have a permanent or long-lasting disability requiring a PCA to help with at least two Activities of Daily Living (ADL’s) such as bathing, dressing, eating, toileting, taking medications and moving about inside the home. Contact MassHealth or SHINE to apply.

MASSEALTH SENIOR CARE OPTIONS (SCO) – SCO is a managed care program for people 65+ who have MassHealth Standard and live in a designated service area of a SCO plan. You receive combined Medicare/MassHealth services as well as social, psychological and comprehensive dental services to help you maintain your health and remain in the community as long as possible. Contact the Plan to apply.

PROGRAM OF ALL-INCLUSIVE CARE FOR ELDERS (PACE) – PACE helps frail people aged 55+ who need extra services to allow them to stay at home, combining medical care and social services that can be provided at an adult day health center, home and/or a facility. These services are provided through PACE-authorized health centers in designated communities. Your income must be at or below 300% of the Federal SSI rate and the asset limit is \$2,000; you must be evaluated and

deemed “nursing home eligible” by ASAP and you must live in a PACE service area and receive all services through the PACE center. Contact the Plan to apply.

MASSEALTH LONG-TERM CARE (LTC) – MassHealth will pay for a person living in a nursing home or other LTC facilities when the person’s monthly income is insufficient to pay for the nursing home costs – there is no income limit, but you may have to pay a patient-paid amount – and there is an asset limit of \$2,000. If married, your community spouse is allowed to keep a limited amount of assets and all of their own income and may be allowed to keep some or all of their institutionalized spouse’s income based on maintenance needs.

In addition, there are certain Medicare Savings Programs, also known as MassHealth Buy-In Programs as well as a Health Safety Net (HSN) program. Contact SHINE for more details.

Portions of this article were derived from the following sources: **SHINE Mini-Manual, Medicare & You – 2017, SHINE Resource Manual** and personal notes.

* Bob is a SHINE counselor

Share your Thoughts!

Do you have any suggestions about what you’d like to see in future editions of the TSRA Newsletter? Are you interested in writing an article about your hobbies or a recent trip? Do you have any expertise in a subject that your fellow TSRA members might find interesting?

If so, we’d love to hear from you! Send an email to us at newsletter@tsretirees.org with your ideas and comments!

2017 John J. Mahoney Memorial Golf Tournament

(Art Dunford)

The Seventeenth Annual John J. Mahoney Memorial Golf Tournament was held on Tuesday, June 13, at Hillview Country Club, North Reading, in 95 degree weather. The only thing hotter than the weather was the team of **Bob Norbedo, Tony Scorpio** and **Ron Milauskas** who fired a seven under par 62 consisting of eleven pars and seven birdies. No other team was even close.

After spending four-plus hours in that heat, you have no idea how good it felt walking into Hillview Lounge at what felt like 65 degrees for appetizers and drinks. Stories of days at AVCO/Textron were exchanged by those who could remember them. After a very enjoyable day, all who attended were talking about returning for next year's tournament, God willing.

Participants in this year's tournament included **John Boness, Angie Caiani, Fran Corbett, Art Dunford, Andrew Heaton, Bob Koralishn, Mark Kovacs, Ron Milauskas, Charlie Neckyfarow, Bob Norbedo, Dick Preble, Tony Scorpio,** and **Bill Stuart.**

Welcome New Members

A warm welcome is extended to the following members who have recently joined TSRA.

Dean Abruzzio
Richard & Virginia Angelo
Ray & Leslie Carroll
Valerie Cote
Charles & Sheri Danforth
Linda DiFazio
Julie & Charles Gibson
Randy Goddard
Brian & Janet Godfrey
Joe & Diane Klocker
Bob & Maureen Melloni
James & Deborah Murphy
Susan Oldenberg
Kenneth & Joni Ouellette
Thomas & Rachel Pantely
David Twombly

Upcoming Events

MAY 17, 2018

ANNUAL SPRING LUNCHEON
Angelica's Restaurant, Middleton, MA

Details forthcoming as they become available

~ ~ ~ ~

In Memoriam

TSRA sends its condolences and sincere sympathy to the families of the following former AVCO/Textron employees/or spouses.

Frank C. Dzedulonis, 02/26/00
Walter E. Christie, 06/13/10
George K. Castle, 01/03/17
John A. Petty, 02/04/17
Stephen J. O'Brien, 03/16/17
Jay Gottesfeld, 03/25/17
Phillippe O. Lajoie, 06/07/17
William J. Bootle, 06/22/17
Julia Demarco, 07/08/17
Albert J. Arsenian, 07/23/17
Theodore "Ted" LaFrance, 07/26/17
Russell A. Rennie, Sr., 07/28/17
Maria "Mary" A. Maccarone, 08/01/17
Arthur Mutchler, 08/02/17
Bernard Wasserman, 08/11/17
Louise Stupack, 08/16/17
(spouse of Edward Stupack)
William "Bill" Zolubus, 08/18/17
Philip F. J. Fote, 08/19/17
Larry Pinero-Olmos, 09/05/17
Albert "Al" W. Mitton, Jr., 09/08/17
Ruth "Ruthie" Coppola, 09/21/17
Terrence P. Crickett, 10/03/17
Charles D. Ball, 10/07/17
Raymond W. Judge, 10/11/17
Gordon F. MacDonald, Sr., 10/17/17
James R. Sheehan, 10/20/17
Richard Levy, 11/10/17
Gerard Thomas Rondeau, 11/22/17
Lale A. Lewis, 11/28/17
(spouse of Paul Lewis)
Dave White, 12/08/17
Alice C. (Benson) Sadlow, 12/11/17
(spouse of Joseph Sadlow)

TSRA Newsletter

**Cindy Mayer Merlini, Editor
Steve Wisotsky, JCC Chairman**

**Articles Submitted By:
Joel Bernstein, Art Dunford, Len Epstein, Mark Kovacs, Joe Martino, Bob Ricles**

**Contributors:
Anita Adams, Carol Coombs, Bob Cranton, Len Epstein, Selena Evans, Dom La Rosa, Bob Littlehale,
Joe Martino, Bob Norbedo, Leo Roy, Mario Sacco, Peg Stanton, Bill Strickland, Steve Wisotsky**

Visit the TSRA website (www.tsretirees.org) for current and past editions of the Newsletter as well as other important information.

**Questions? Comments? Contact us at:
TSRA Communications, P.O. Box 732, Framingham, MA 01701
tsracomm@tsretirees.org**