



# “WHAT’S HAPPENING”

**Moving forward since 1970 ✱ Published Monthly Issue 12 ✱ December 2020**  
**Charlie Mott, President (734) 756-6099**      **Ray Owen, Treasurer (248) 348-3626**  
**Annual Dues \$8.00 per person till the age of 80**

## December Greetings!

As we wrap up 2020, it has been an amazing year. So many things changing and how we “do things” in our regular lives. With months of isolation and limiting crowds, and occasions of celebration and respect, such as funerals and memorials being very limited, a turning of the calendar page to 2021 should bring some relief. Please continue to Mask Up when you are out anywhere in public. The Mask protects us as much as the other folks we encounter!

All Retirees Association events are still in limbo. There isn't any end date in sight for starting back to monthly luncheons and board meetings. The Union Hall is still limited to job referrals only. Very limited staff is at the hall for business, all others are working from home. None of the regular meetings that take place for our active membership have been restored in person. They are all being held virtually, those that are taking place.

Consider taking a bit of time to contact fellow retirees by telephone, mail or email and check on one another. This is also a perfect time to reach out in celebration of those of our members who enjoy birthdays and/or anniversaries in this month of holiday festivities.

## A brief History of the Celebrations of the Christmas season.

Christmas has its roots in ancient times and is celebrated around the world. The first few hundred years after Jesus Christ was born, his birthday was not celebrated. The

Epiphany, when the three kings (The Magi) from separate places of the world visited Christ, this was the focus of Christians, this trek symbolized that salvation was open to the whole world, not just one nation. Early church leaders promoted a celebration of Christ's Birthday, which was officially celebrated for the first time on December 25, 336. This celebration took place in the Roman Empire.

Saturnalia, a Roman festival that honored the Roman God Saturn, lasted from December 17<sup>th</sup> to December 23. Along with the Winter Solstice, the darkest day of the year, taking place a few days before December 25<sup>th</sup> was a time of celebration for the pagans. Early church leaders thought that days that had been set aside to honor pagan gods could be changed to honor Christianity. Over time this acceptance took place.



*Years ago, there was only one Santa Claus. Now because of genetic engineering, there can be lots of them.*

It is essential for anyone attending our luncheons to contact our Treasurer, Ray Owen (248) 348-3626, to provide an accurate count of those attending. Make checks payable to “The Retirees Association”, mail to Ray Owen at 428 Welch Rd, Northville, MI 48167.



While some Christians disliked any association with pagan traditions, Saint Augustine of Hippo (354-430) wrote "We hold this day holy, not like the pagans because of the birth of the sun, but because of him who made it."

In Great Britain, Christmas as celebrated until the Puritans, led by Oliver Cromwell and supported by the government, outlawed Christmas. In 1644 an act of Parliament banned the festival and passed an ordinance in 1647 confirming the abolition of Christmas, making its celebration punishable. The ban remained in place until the restoration of the Monarchy in 1660. In the minds of puritans Christmas was too strong of an association with the Old Catholic faith, of which Christmas was an important date on the liturgical calendar.

In the 1800's, American's views on Christmas changed quite a bit. Washington Irving wrote fictitious stories of how Christmas had been celebrated in England before the Puritans took over, and some of those ideas caught on. German immigrants brought with them the practice of evergreen branches and trees in homes during the winter, as a reminder of life during hard times. Catholic immigrants brought the tradition started by St. Francis of keeping small nativity scenes in their home. By the late 1800's most Americans celebrated Christmas, in 1870 President Grant and Congress declared Christmas, the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ, savior of the world, to be a national holiday.

There are other religious holidays that also take place at this time of year.

Hanukkah, an 8-day celebration, beginning the 25<sup>th</sup> day of the Jewish month of Kislev,

commemorates the re-dedication of the Second Temple in Jerusalem, which followed the Jewish victory over the Syrian-Greeks in 165 B.C.E.

In the US, approximately 5 million people celebrate Kwanzaa each year. It's a 7-day holiday that celebrates African Culture. It begins December 26 and ends January 1.

There are many ways that we celebrate the climax of a year, with Christmas being one of the best known. Many peoples and many cultures have created their own rituals of celebration. It is a wonderful place to live where all different peoples, and their individual choices and ways of doing things can be embraced and enjoyed by all of us.

Best wishes to all of us for a Safe, Healthy, and Happy Holiday Season! Happy New Year too!

***FYI: if you haven't paid your 2020 dues, your membership will lapse. 2021 dues are due on January 1. If you owe past dues, or wish to pay your current dues, or both, (payable to "the Retirees Association") please make your \$8 per person, per year, payments to Ray Owen, whose information is at the bottom of the front page of this newsletter.***

#### **Florida Annual Luncheon:**

Due to the uncertainty caused by the Covid-19 virus no plans have been made for the 2021 Florida Annual Luncheon. I hope you are all well, stay safe and I hope to see you at the next one. ~Syl Ludwic~

**Members who have passed:**

Joelyn Gaston, wife to William Gaston  
John Lents  
Clifford Levitt  
Gerda Mann, wife to Philip Mann Jr.  
Eula Plunkett, wife to Sam Plunkett

**New Retiree Association Members:**

John & Karen Brandt  
David & Debra Ahern  
Joseph Takacs Jr.

**DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS:**

Ray Owen .....	1 <sup>st</sup>
Dale LaPointe .....	1 <sup>st</sup>
Kathy Galliker .....	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Anne Saulles .....	3 <sup>rd</sup>
Loretta Verdaglio .....	3 <sup>rd</sup>
Dixie Deaton .....	4 <sup>th</sup>
Barbara Kniffen .....	4 <sup>th</sup>
Sherry Duncanson .....	5 <sup>th</sup>
Caryl Sedliar .....	5 <sup>th</sup>
William Doherty .....	5 <sup>th</sup>
Gerald Welchner .....	5 <sup>th</sup>
Robert E. Miller .....	6 <sup>th</sup>
Louis Ashley .....	6 <sup>th</sup>
Gerald Bolton .....	6 <sup>th</sup>
Timothy McGahey .....	6 <sup>th</sup>
John Tom Kraehling .....	6 <sup>th</sup>
Joanne Vollbrecht .....	7 <sup>th</sup>
Elizabeth Holowicki .....	7 <sup>th</sup>
Gershon Flam .....	8 <sup>th</sup>
Mort Dunlop .....	8 <sup>th</sup>
Frank DiCintio .....	9 <sup>th</sup>
Dona Koerber .....	9 <sup>th</sup>
Melanie Radjewski .....	9 <sup>th</sup>
Carol Anderson .....	9 <sup>th</sup>
Jeanette Olesnavage .....	9 <sup>th</sup>
Michael Duman .....	9 <sup>th</sup>
Anthony McDonald .....	9 <sup>th</sup>
Debra Armstrong .....	11 <sup>th</sup>
Jeffrey Long .....	11 <sup>th</sup>
John Bridges .....	11 <sup>th</sup>

Ronald Rau .....	12 <sup>th</sup>
James Statzer .....	12 <sup>th</sup>
Susan Diederichs .....	12 <sup>th</sup>
Gerald Parka .....	12 <sup>th</sup>
Lewis LaPlante .....	12 <sup>th</sup>
Isabelle Strelczuk .....	14 <sup>th</sup>
Richard Lockman .....	14 <sup>th</sup>
William Gaston .....	14 <sup>th</sup>
James Woelkers .....	14 <sup>th</sup>
Linda Slais .....	14 <sup>th</sup>
Thomas Weertz .....	14 <sup>th</sup>
Raymond Arvidson Jr .....	15 <sup>th</sup>
Mary Margaret Ross .....	15 <sup>th</sup>
Pauline Krusinski .....	15 <sup>th</sup>
Karen Harte .....	15 <sup>th</sup>
Thomas Salmoni .....	15 <sup>th</sup>
Kenneth Beals .....	15 <sup>th</sup>
Jerry Ellison .....	15 <sup>th</sup>
Bruce Dunbar .....	15 <sup>th</sup>
Philip Baschal .....	16 <sup>th</sup>
Norma Hackstock .....	17 <sup>th</sup>
Theresa Lis .....	17 <sup>th</sup>
Lucy Warsinski .....	17 <sup>th</sup>
Anna Brogley .....	17 <sup>th</sup>
Charles Bertolini .....	19 <sup>th</sup>
Ron Allgeyer .....	20 <sup>th</sup>
Amalia Gold .....	20 <sup>th</sup>
Reginald Tucker .....	20 <sup>th</sup>
Joseph Schraufnagel .....	20 <sup>th</sup>
Michael Parker .....	21 <sup>st</sup>
Betty Nelson .....	21 <sup>st</sup>
Robert Parrish .....	21 <sup>st</sup>
Mario Boccarossa .....	22 <sup>nd</sup>
Kevin McCaffery .....	22 <sup>nd</sup>
Joseph Castmore .....	22 <sup>nd</sup>
David Ebendick .....	22 <sup>nd</sup>
Lois Mansfield .....	22 <sup>nd</sup>
Susan Grant .....	23 <sup>rd</sup>
Buck Scofield .....	23 <sup>rd</sup>
Donald Loudy .....	24 <sup>th</sup>
Gerald Quinn .....	24 <sup>th</sup>
James Rogers .....	24 <sup>th</sup>
Kathleen Watson .....	24 <sup>th</sup>
Bob Dacey .....	24 <sup>th</sup>
Patricia Shaw .....	24 <sup>th</sup>
Tony Gronos .....	25 <sup>th</sup>
Keith Koch .....	26 <sup>th</sup>

Raymond McCants .....	26 <sup>th</sup>
Harold Barber .....	27 <sup>th</sup>
Leon Blandina .....	27 <sup>th</sup>
Gerard Taube .....	28 <sup>th</sup>
Diane Marcoux.....	28 <sup>th</sup>
Ilene Masiarczyk .....	28 <sup>th</sup>
James E. Peltier II.....	28 <sup>th</sup>
Lynn Garrison Coons .....	29 <sup>th</sup>
Ruth Fobare.....	29 <sup>th</sup>
Dennis Jarzombek .....	29 <sup>th</sup>
Frank Behn .....	30 <sup>th</sup>
Richard Parks .....	30 <sup>th</sup>
Keith Woznick .....	31 <sup>st</sup>
Kym Newbold.....	31 <sup>st</sup>
Susan Miller.....	31 <sup>st</sup>
Bonnie Schrot .....	31 <sup>st</sup>
William Bryce .....	31 <sup>st</sup>
William Sproul.....	31 <sup>st</sup>
Barbara De Meulenaere .....	31 <sup>st</sup>

**DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES:**

Daniel & Marilou Diamond .....	2 <sup>nd</sup> (1983)
Robert & Jeanette Giroux .....	3 <sup>rd</sup> (1977)
Walter & Leslie Dungey.....	8 <sup>th</sup> (2012)
Dan & Esta Smith.....	9 <sup>th</sup> (1967)
Tom & Gail VanRyckeghem .....	11 <sup>th</sup> (1981)
Donald & Gloria Loudy .....	14 <sup>th</sup> (1974)
David & Darlene Crocker .....	14 <sup>th</sup> (1959)
Dannie & Yvonne Finley.....	15 <sup>th</sup> (1973)
Michael & Linda Parker .....	18 <sup>th</sup> (1971)
Kathy Devlin & George Hickens .....	20 <sup>th</sup> (2002)
Keith & Sheila Koch .....	23 <sup>rd</sup> (1961)
Edward & Carol Zemnickas.....	28 <sup>th</sup> (1963)
Ken & Judy Byrd .....	29 <sup>th</sup> (1982)
James & Joan Mioduszewski .....	30 <sup>th</sup> (1985)

**GOLDEN YEARS:**

Dan & Esta Smith.....	53 Years
Edward & Carol Zemnickas.....	57 Years
Keith & Sheila Koch .....	59 Years
David & Darlene Crocker .....	61 Years

**Alliance for Retired Americans/Friday Alert, November 23, 2020**

***Unanswered Vaccine Questions Come to the Forefront: Will They Work? Who Gets Them First? And How Much Will They Cost?:***

On Monday biotech corporation Moderna Inc. announced that its new Covid-19 vaccine has been 94.5% effective in preventing infection in tests so far. On Wednesday, Pfizer and BioNTech announced results from their late-stage vaccine trial, saying that theirs was 95% effective and had no serious side effects. The results of both trials add to the growing confidence that vaccines could help end the pandemic in a matter of months and restore a sense of normalcy to everyone's lives.

There is widespread agreement that healthcare workers should be a high priority in getting the vaccine first. Epidemiologists say workers in essential industries, people with certain medical conditions and people age 65 and older would likely also be among the early recipients. Much, but not all, of the funding for the development of the Moderna vaccine came from taxpayers. Moderna received nearly \$2.5 billion from the federal government -- reinforcing the belief among consumer and health advocates that any taxpayer-funded vaccines or treatments for COVID-19 must be accessible, affordable, and available to all who need them. The Alliance is urging Congress to pass the Make Medications Affordable by Preventing Pandemic Price-gouging (MMAPPP) Act, which would prohibit monopoly control over drug prices and require the federal government to mandate affordable prices for treatments and vaccines developed with taxpayer dollars. Representatives Jan Schakowsky



(IL), Francis Rooney (FL), Lloyd Doggett (TX), Rosa DeLauro (CT), and Peter DeFazio (OR) introduced the legislation. "The news of there being two highly effective vaccines is very promising," said Robert Roach, Jr., President of the Alliance. "However this and any treatment that we fund with our tax dollars must be available and affordable for all who need it. Congress must also pass the MMAPPP Act to ensure this happens for drugs to treat COVID-19 or other diseases."

### **Trump's Refusal to Concede and Begin the Transition is Putting Lives at Risk:**

While President-elect Joe Biden is moving forward with transition plans; President Donald Trump still refuses to accept that he has lost the election. Leaders of Biden's coronavirus board are calling on Trump to share critical Covid-19 data with Biden's transition team as soon as possible. They and other public health experts stress that the federal government's delay in starting the transition will hurt efforts to manage and end the pandemic crisis. The Biden coronavirus transition team is barred from consulting with any federal health officials. That means they do not have real-time data on available hospital beds or the status of the National Strategic Stockpile. This includes information about the availability of therapeutic treatment supplies and the amount of protective equipment (PPE). For now they are simply relying on data from state and local officials and non-governmental information sources such as the Covid Tracking Project. On Monday, Biden warned that "more people may die" if the Trump Administration continues to obstruct the smooth transition of power. "There is no doubt that President Trump's refusal to share key information with the Biden administration puts countless lives in

harm's way," said Alliance Executive Director Richard Fiesta. "Not sharing information about the crisis shows a disregard for the American people and is unacceptable." Despite President-elect Biden's victory, Government Services Administrator (GSA) Emily Murphy has refused to allow the transition to a Biden Administration to begin. The GSA supports the transitions for all new presidents. Her obstruction will hinder the administration's ability to hit the ground running and threaten the integrity of our national security.

### **Administration Attacks the Social Safety Net in its Final Weeks:**

Although Donald Trump's presidency is coming to a close; his administration is still working to implement a number of regulations that target people with disabilities, food benefits for the economically disadvantaged and worker protections. On Monday, the Trump administration finalized a regulation that could make it harder for people who apply for Social Security and disability benefits to appeal denials. And last week Social Security Administration (SSA) officials said they are going to increase continuing disability reviews, which are examinations of whether people receiving disability benefits are still disabled. Eligibility standards for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, or food stamps, are also being tightened, which would take food away from 3 million beneficiaries. "These regulations are nothing more than last ditch efforts by the Administration to weaken Social Security and other important programs," said Joseph Peters, Jr., Secretary-Treasurer of the Alliance. "Forcing people with disabilities to prove their eligibility repeatedly and excessively is unnecessary and cruel."