



# DOTRA'S.....DotLine.....

ISSUE NO. 98

February 2017

A Publication of the New Jersey Department of Transportation Retirees Association Inc.

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

By Clint Griggs

On behalf of the DOTRA Board of Directors I wish all a Happy, Healthy and Prosperous New Year, 2017.

This issue of DOTLINE is a little bit different than most. As the Board of Director's continues its outreach efforts, we are pleased to provide you with the first fruits of our labor. There is a great deal of information and commentary from many of the members we have contacted thus far. We will continue our Outreach Program until we feel we have touched base with everyone we can. So...if you should receive a call or email from one of the Directors it is not a prank call, just a colleague looking for a few minutes of your time. If you are not contacted please feel free to reach out to me or any board member. Our thanks to Dot Andres for chairing this huge endeavor.

As you read this issue our Floridians are gearing up for their annual Reunion Luncheon scheduled for February 14, 2017 in St. Augustine under the coordination of Steffan Franklin. For more details, please contact: Steffan Franklin @ 732-713-6263, [stefranklin@aol.com](mailto:stefranklin@aol.com)

You will also find valuable information on several upcoming DOTRA events: the Spring Breakfast Social on March 15, 2017 and a Wine Tasting event on March 27, 2017. Our DOTRA Socials are fun filled events so be sure to attend as many as you can. You'll be glad you did!

Finally, in addition to reaching out to our current members, we are actively pursuing ways to attract all DOT retirees to the DOTRA family. This has been difficult for us in recent years. If you know of a DOT'er contemplating retirement, let them know

about our great organization, or drop their name to one of our directors and we will reach out to them. Stay warm, safe and healthy for the remainder of the winter as we anxiously await the coming of Spring.

**Our mailing address:**  
**DOTRA**  
**PO BOX 77160**  
**WEST TRENTON, NJ 08628**

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**Spring Breakfast Social**  
March 15, 2017 @ 9:30 AM  
Golden Dawn Diner on White Horse-Mercerville Road, Hamilton, NJ

**Wine Tasting**  
March 27, 2017 @ 6:30 PM  
Mama Floras, Ewing, NJ

## **DOTRA BOARD MONTHLY MEETINGS**

DOTRA continues to hold its regular monthly meetings on the first Tuesday of each month. All are invited to attend. Hope to see you there. Our next meeting will be held on Tuesday – March 7, 2017 at 11 AM at **Tessara's Restaurant, 812 Route 33, Hamilton Twp.** Our business meeting starts at 11 AM followed by a Dutch-treat luncheon. Schedule of future meetings at Tessara's:

- Tuesday, April 4, 2017
- Tuesday, May 2, 2017
- Tuesday, June 6, 2017

## **DOTRA ON THE INTERNET!!**

You can read the current issue of the DOTLINE on the Website- as well as check back issues!!!

Log onto DOTRA's own Web Site:

<http://www.dotra.org>

**2017 DUES are due January 1, 2017!!!**

**If you haven't paid your 2017 dues yet, please do so NOW!!!**

Check your Mailing Label to see if you are paid up for 2017!! Electronic "mailers" have been notified by e-mail! Don't forget to notify DOTRA if you have a change of address. This is especially important for Life members and those who receive DOTLINE electronically.

## **DOTLINE ELECTRONICALLY**

If you are willing to receive your DOTLINE via electronic mailing, please submit your email address to us at:

**[DOTRAexpress@yahoo.com](mailto:DOTRAexpress@yahoo.com)**

**The Transporter** is now available to retirees on the DOTRA website at <http://www.dotra.org>, with the 2011, 2012, 2013, and 2016 issues already posted. Future issues will be posted on a quarterly basis.

## **DOTRA EXECUTIVE BOARD & OFFICERS**

PRESIDENT	Clint Griggs	609-888-0115
1st VP	Jay Johnston	609-588-0930
2nd VP	Gerry Sellner	609-737-1665
TREASURER	Lou Papp	609-585-7697
ASST. TREAS.	Frank Stia	609-882-3862
REC. SEC	Andrea Mansfield	609-890-9497
CORRES. SEC.	Donna Troiano	609-298-5962

## **DIRECTORS/TERM OF OFFICE**

Joe Bodnar (17)	Frank Palise (17)
Janis Stia (17)	Art Egan (17)
Frank Herrera (17)	Peter Yull (17)
Donna Troiano (18)	Dot Andres (18)
Gerry Sellner (18)	Mike Eckel (18)
Andrea Mansfield (19)	John Rainiero (19)
Lou Papp (19)	Bruce Strickland (19)
Bob Miller (19)	Jay Johnston (19)
Clinton Griggs (19)	Frank Stia (19)

## **COMMITTEES**

AUDIT	Frank Palise	609-896-2011
CHAPLAIN	Jay Johnson	609-588-0930
MEMBERSHIP	Janis Stia	609-882-3862
BY-LAWS	Art Egan	609-585-9145
HISTORIAN	Mike Eckel	609-499-9225
ACTIVITIES	Vacant	xxx-xxx-xxxx
DOTLINE	Frank Palise	609-896-2011
DATABASE	Gerry Sellner	609-737-1665
WEBSITE	Bruce Strickland	505-847-3300
DOT MEMORIAL	Jim Dixon	609-298-3398
NOMINATING	Joe Bodnar	609-298-6260

## **Directors Emeritus**

Adrian Lincoln, Margaret "Peg" Wieger, Hazel Rockhill, Phil Vecere, and Chet Andres

## **MEMBERSHIP REPORT**

**By Janis Stia**

During the last three months, no new members have joined DOTRA:

## **CHAPLIN'S REPORT**

**By Jay Johnston**

We would like to be informed about any retiree who has passed away, is ill, confined to their home, in a rehabilitation center, or needs help in one way or another. Please send any information to me at:

3 Golden Crest Court, Hamilton N.J. 08691

Phone: 609-588-0930

E-mail: [jay050645@yahoo.com](mailto:jay050645@yahoo.com)

## RECENT OBITUARIES

Leon Ted Reiser	?
Dorothy Louf	88
Mary Ida, Eda, Turano*	88
Dorthea Russell	77
Gertrude Hart*	?

\* Denotes DOTRA Member

## MEMBER'S CORNER

We are saddened to report that Second Vice President Jerry Sellner's wife, Marguerite, passed away on January 15, 2017. Our thoughts and prayers go out to Jerry and his family during sorrowful time.

## WINE TASTING

By Peter Yull

There will be a wine tasting on Monday, March 27. For this tasting we are anticipating some South American wines

Tasting will be held at Mama Floras, on Olden Ave, in the ShopRite shopping center near Parkside Ave. We start at 6:30 pm. Please note: the cost for the tasting is \$35.00, which covers the cost of the wine and the food (we have some eats to go with the wine, so don't eat dinner beforehand). I am planning to include at least one higher priced wine. A lot of interesting wine, a lot of good food, and a lot of good company!

If you plan to attend please email me at [pyull@aol.com](mailto:pyull@aol.com), so I can get an idea of numbers. I can be reached by phone at 609-394-7145.

## DOTRA PROJECT OUT REACH CONTACTING OUR MEMBERS

By Dot Andres

Our DOTRA Board of Directors has "kicked off" a new Project-reaching out to our Membership List of almost 400 Retirees and finding out the status of our

Members – some of those members we have not heard from since they left the NJDOT! It is a big task of updating addresses and individual member status. The great part is when we have a hit - get to talk to one of our former co-workers - AND we will be sharing it with you.

Our first group of responses was collected by **Director Jay Johnston** and included **Lynn Russo (Local Aid)** who has been living in Hilton Head for the last 10 years. Likes being close to the Beach, doesn't miss working, but misses her NJDOT friends. Her Dad was **Russ Parker**, a familiar name to older retirees. She lives on the 12<sup>th</sup> green in a golf community. **Director Bob Miller (C&M)** reached **Bill Davies (GeoTech)**. He lives in Fountain Links, Arizona and sends regards to his former work friends. **Bill Dill (MIS)** and **Matt DiBenedetto (Project Dev)** and **Tom Dowd (Const)** still run into people from the NJDOT. **Helen Rose (Support Services)** told Jay that she is slowing down at 91 but you would never know it. She loves to read the DOTLINE and is a true supporter of DOTRA activities - usually attends every one.

**Director Janis Stia** was successful in contacting **Bob Micai (C&M)** and spoke at length with his wife Peg. The Micai's recently celebrated their 55<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with a cruise. Bob continues to work part time at Disney World - over 18 years with Mickey! **Ellen McCourt (Computer Services /OTIS)** keeps very busy traveling with Steve on off-beat vacations and traveled to Alaska this last year. **Callie Olexy (C&M)** and **Janis' Mom is now living at Bran-dywine Assisted Living in Pennington. She will be 100 years young on February 10<sup>th</sup>** and can't believe it! She loves seeing NJDOT people. She went to the picnic in September and even the Annual Holiday Party. **Frank Hamler (Construction)** celebrated his 90th birthday in August. Spends lots of time visiting doctors but gets around OK. Enjoys getting our paper. Keep up the good work.

**Director Frank Palise** was able to reach **Don Telesco (Const)**. He is still living in Somerville area and hasn't gotten out to any DOTRA activities. Also, we are saddened to hear that **Mary Thompson, (Traffic Engineering)** has now moved to a nursing

home. Mary used to attend most all DOTRA events after retiring.

**Frank Wegel (C&M)** and wife Kathy are still in Sebastian Florida. Made it safely through the recent hurricane and still sounds like the same old Frank.

**President Clint Griggs** got right to work and contacted **Aldo Genovesi (Permits)**. Aldo is enjoying retirement and attends almost all DOTRA functions. Thanks for the support Aldo. **AL Gallo (Safety)** is busy with a music group and performs at area Nursing homes 3 times a week. What a great activity and service you are performing! **Steffan Franklin (Structural Eval)** lives in The Villages, Florida and is one of the “elected officials” there. There are 2 other DOTRA members living there- **Jim Morrison (Design)** and **Bob Marks (Design)**. Stefan also is now the Co-ordinator of the DOTRA Florida Reunion which is held annually in February at various Florida locations. This year it will be held on February 14<sup>th</sup> in St Augustine. **Art Eisdorfer (Design/Planning)** was quick to respond to Clint that he and wife Julie now live in Vero Beach FL. Art is very active in the Homeowners’ Assn., play tennis daily, do plenty of eating, drinking and partying. Art keeps in touch with **Bruce Strickland** and visits with Frank Lewis often. Sounds like the good life!

**Director Bruce Strickland (Info Tech)** may live out in New Mexico but he was quick to get on the phone contacting those DOTRA members on his list. **John Sindora (Materials)** had a full-time job caring for his wife, Sheila, who was bedridden with spinal stenosis. **Sadly, she passed away on January 5, 2017!** Our thoughts and prayers are with John and his family. Dealing with his own health issues, he enjoys reading the DOTLINE and sorry he missed the DOTRA Picnic. **Ed Skwara (Design)** has kept busy but is now fully retired. Visits his ex-wife in the nursing home 4 days a week. Always attends and enjoys the DOTRA picnics. **Charlie Slack (C&M)** says retirement was the best thing he ever did. Lots of fishing and splitting wood. Hasn’t played much golf in the last couple of years due to open heart surgery but now he’s back into the game. Fishing in the Outer Banks twice a year. Says to be sure to say hello to **Frank Wegel (Materials)**. Appreciates the call!

**Wayne and Toni Smith (C&M)** have a cottage in Tuckerton and a small RV which they travel with a lot. **John Spedding (Landscape)** keeps busy doing handyman jobs He’s also been stone-carving for 20 years. Also, working actively on the NJDOT Memorial committee and enjoyed the people at the NJDOT. Says the NJDOT is not the happy place it was when we were there but he’s enjoying life. **Audrey Sperling (Local Aid)** is living at Rose Hill Assisted Living now. Her sister lives there also. Says ‘to enjoy life.’ **Dot Stam (Acctg)** hasn’t attended DOTRA events since husband Pete passed away but enjoys getting the DOTLINE. **Kathy Steigerwalt (Maintenance)** moved to Ohio to be near to grandchildren but misses New Jersey. She loved working for NJDOT and misses the people. **Ted Stine (C&M)** is living in Georgia and spends time at their Florida condo. Says he “retired too early” and has been “retired too long.” **Brian Strizki (Design)** is still working full-time and supervising 90 employees. Plans to work 4 more years and retire to North Carolina to be near his grandchildren. Did get to stop at the last DOTRA picnic. **Bob Suess (Design)** says he was busy doing surveying. Enjoys going to DOTRA events and getting together with former co-workers. He’s concerned about our Pensions and Healthcare. Aren’t we all! **Keith Swango (Roadway/Bridges/RR)** moved to Spring Hill, FL recently. Says hello to the DOTRA Board. **Lorraine Sweat (Human Resources)** retired in 2008 and has a part-time job. Enjoys her grand and great grandchildren. Occasionally runs into DOTers! **Wladislaw “Lad” Szalaj (Research)** says “Retirement is Great!” Volunteers at a senior dog sanctuary as well as a Food Bank. Did most of his travel while working. Has stayed in Allentown to be close to grandchildren. Monthly dinners with church group; weekly dinners with friends. Enjoys the DOTLINE.

**DON'T WAIT FOR US TO CALL YOU.  
CONTACT US WITH YOUR NEWS!!!**

**SEND TO DOTRA E-MAIL ADDRESS:  
DOTRAexpress@yahoo.com  
or call:  
Dot Andres @ 386-426-5356  
or  
Clinton Griggs @ 609-888-0115**

## **HISTORY OF ROUTE 31**

**By Mike Eckel**

**Route 31** is a state highway in New Jersey, United States. It runs 48.93 mi (78.75 km) from U.S. Route 1 Business (US 1 Bus.) /US 206 in Trenton, Mercer County north to an intersection with US 46 in Buttzville in White Township, Warren County. Along the way, Route 31 heads through the communities of Flemington, Clinton and Washington. Most of the highway is state-maintained; however, the section within the city limits of Trenton is maintained by the city. Much of Route 31 is a two-lane highway that passes through farmland, woodland, and mountainous areas. Two portions of the route—from Trenton to Pennington and from Ringoes to Clinton—consist of more development.

The highway was constructed from 1926 to 1935. Route 31 has carried two different numbers in the past. It was known as **Route 30** between 1927 and 1953, when it was renumbered to **Route 69** to avoid conflicting with US 30 in southern New Jersey. It was renumbered to Route 31 in 1967 due to sign theft that resulted from the sexual meaning of the number 69. There were plans made in the late 1960s and early 1970s to build a freeway in the Route 31 corridor that would begin in the Trenton area and extend as far north as Interstate 84 (I-84) in Port Jervis, New York; however, it was canceled in the mid-1970s due to opposition from area residents and environmental and financial constraints. In recent years, the portion of Route 31 between Flemington and Clinton has been widened to four lanes. In addition, there was a failed project to build a bypass of Flemington that would have also eliminated the **Flemington** Circle.

## **NJDOT EMPLOYEE MEMORIAL COMMITTEE REPORT**

**By Jim Dixon**

The Employee Memorial Committee did not meet. Only thing to report is they had a successful Silent Auction in December when they sold 241 gift baskets for a fund raiser.

## **SPRING BREAKFAST**

**By Joe Bodner**

It's that time of year again, so get ready to attend our spring breakfast. This year we will have it at the Golden Dawn Diner on White Horse-Mercerville Road. It will be held on March 15 at 9:30 AM and is a "Buffet" style. Anyone having difficulty negotiating the Buffet, don't let that stop you from attending. Members of the Board of Directors in attendance will assist those having difficulty. For further information please see the enclosed flyer. Hope to see you there.

**LAST WORD...**You have the last word. Maybe someday you will tell us what it is....

**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWALS**

( ) **NEW** APPLICATION FOR DOTRA MEMBERSHIP - \$10.00/ YEAR \_\_\_\_\_  
- \$75.00 LIFE MEMBERSHIP \_\_\_\_\_

**(FILL IN FORM COMPLETELY)**

( ) **RENEWAL** OF DOTRA MEMBERSHIP FOR YEAR \_\_\_\_\_ CHECK FOR \$10.00 ENCLOSED

( ) REQUEST FOR **LIFE MEMBERSHIP IN DOTRA** \_\_\_\_\_ CHECK FOR \$75.00 IS ENCLOSED  
(Converting from annual membership)

( ) **CHANGE OF ADDRESS** (FILL IN NAME ADDRESS,-both snail mail and email, AND TELEPHONE NUMBER)

( ) PLEASE ADD **YOUR COMMENTS** FOR INCLUSION IN AN UPCOMING DOTLINE.

**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_ **TELEPHONE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**STREET/ PO BOX:** \_\_\_\_\_ **E-MAIL:** \_\_\_\_\_

**TOWN/ CITY:** \_\_\_\_\_ **COUNTY** \_\_\_\_\_ **STATE** \_\_\_\_\_ **ZIP** \_\_\_\_\_

**EMAIL ADDRESS:** \_\_\_\_\_

**FORMER UNIT WITHIN NJDOT:** \_\_\_\_\_ **YEARS WORKED** \_\_\_\_\_ **YEAR RETIRED** \_\_\_\_\_

**I WOULD LIKE TO WORK ON A DOTRA COMMITTEE** \_\_\_\_\_

**COMMENTS:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Send Application and Check to: "DOTRA" – PO BOX 77160, WEST TRENTON, NJ 08628**

**NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION RETIREES ASSOCIATION**