

DOTRA'S.....DOTLine.....



ISSUE NO. 100

August 2017

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

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

By Clint Griggs

Another milestone for DOTRA! Last year we celebrated 25 memorable years as a social organization. This edition of the **DOTLine** is number 100! Many thanks and accolades to the Editors, Directors and contributors to all the 100 **DOTLines**. We all look forward to our quarterly **DOTLine**.

Those who attended our Anniversary Luncheon in June, were treated to a special presentation by Kate (Francis) Immordino of her recent book "**Double Image**." Congratulations to Kate on her accomplishment and special thanks for an enjoyable introduction to your book. Also, our thanks to Frank and Janis Stia for another great DOTRA event.

Be sure to read on for future DOTRA events in this issue to the DOTLine. Next up is our annual picnic in September. Who can resist a DOTRA picnic catered by Fred & Pete's Deli. Other great get togethers are in the planning stages as well. Info is contained herein.

Hopefully, everyone is enjoying their summer in Jersey (and elsewhere) as we cope with "if you don't like the weather here, just wait a few minutes!"

We are still interested in filling a few seats on the DOTRA Board of Directors. If you have an interest, please let us know.

Have a safe, healthy and enjoyable rest of the summer!

Our mailing address:

**DOTRA
PO BOX 77160
WEST TRENTON, NJ 08628**

UPCOMING EVENTS

Annual DOTRA Picnic
Mercer County Valley Road Picnic Grounds
Off Route 29 – Lambertville, NJ
September 13, 2017

Rockettes Christmas Trip
Radio City Music Hall
November 30, 2017

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 – September 5, 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:

October 3, 2017

November 7, 2017

December 5, 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 were 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

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

Donna Troiano (18)	Dot Andres (18)
Mike Eckel (18)	Gerry Sellner (18)
Andrea Mansfield (18)	John Rainiero (19)
Bruce Strickland (19)	Bob Miller (19)
Lou Papp (19)	Clinton Griggs (19)
Frank Stia (19)	Joe Bodnar (20)
Frank Palise (20)	Janis Stia (20)
Jay Johnston (20)	

COMMITTEES

AUDIT	Frank Palise	609-896-2011
CHAPLAIN	Jay Johnson	609-588-0930
MEMBERSHIP	Janis Stia	609-882-3862
BY-LAWS	Vacant	xxx-xxx-xxxx
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, there have been no new members joining 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

RECENT OBITUARIES

Helen Burt	68
Luis Summers*	84
Milton Funari	90
Carmen Flore	84
Alvin Driver	76
Leonard Procaccino Sr.	89
Carl Rebbeck*	78
Jean Melana*	99
Wilma Cimino*	87
Jean Sgro Melana	99
Joan Hartmann	80

* Denotes DOTRA Member

**NJDOT EMPLOYEE MEMORIAL
JULY 2017 COMMITTEE REPORT
By Jim Dixon**

The Committee had a very successful Employee Appreciation Picnic. They want to make it even better next year.

The North Region is considering another Memorial Site in North Jersey Headquarters.

The Annual September 9/11 Remembrance Ceremony will be held on Monday September 8, 2017. The starting time will be either 9:00 AM or 10:00 AM. The Committee is working with the Commissioner's Office to honor former DOT Commissioners Jamie Fox and John Sheridan for their support of the EMC.

**DOTRA
From a Dream to a Reality-How it all began
By Mike Eckel**

A little over 25 years ago a man named Guy LoBue and then Commissioner Thomas Downs initiated an idea for a retiree association. They dreamed of forming a group of retired employees from the NJDOT so that they could stay in touch with each other and share their retirement adventures with all who would join. Hence, the NJ Department of Transportation Retirement Association (DOTRA) became a reality. In the beginning, approximately 450 retirees from in and out of state expressed interest to join and about 245 sent in their dues which at the time was \$10.00 per year, as it still is today.

The original officers were: President - Guy LoBue; 1st Vice President - Frank Sarnecki; 2nd Vice President - Ken Hey; Treasurer - Warren Turner; Assistant Treasurer - Bob Mitchell; Corresponding Secretary - Lois Summers; Recording Secretary - Gloria Allen. The original Directors were: Chet Andres, Richard Hulsart, Adrian Lincoln, Francis "Bob" Fitzpatrick, Andrew Kraemer, Walter Gable and John Summers. There also were committees: Blood Bank - Bill Van Hise; By Laws - John Summers; Chaplain - Leonard Forlines; Activities - Dot Andres.

Also, we received considerable help from the following DOT staff: Helen Budd - Human Resources; Linda Zajac - Communications; Ann Chmielewski and Lou Tondini - Records and Services gave constant help so that DOTRA could be organized.

And here we are today a little over 25 years later and not that much has changed over the years. We still have four newsletters per year, three luncheons and a picnic and bus trips and events. We still encourage members, as it was from the very beginning, to make suggestions for events and trips and to attend our monthly meetings.

**The End of an Era and a New Beginning
By a Charter organizer - Frank A. Sarnecki**

Deciding what we want to do for a living and perhaps for the rest of our Lives, for most people, is a tough decision. For a few of us, we still don't know. An old adage is how do I know if I am making the right decision? The answer is: "by making the wrong decision." I know I made the right decision and I am certain that you also made the right decision.

I remember in 1962 while enrolled in a real estate appraisal course at Rutgers (then) College, the Professor referred to a group of men in the class as the "highway men". During a break, I approached Bob Delaney, a well-dressed highway man, wearing a white shirt with a pen, pencil and a Dietzgen scale ruler in his pocket. It looked impressive. He took the time to tell me about the part he played in the then Highway Department. It did sound like something good for me. Bob was kind enough to give all the details needed to go for an interview. What a lucky day. After being interviewed for about an hour, he said that President Eisenhower approved plans for an interstate highway system and therefore the staff would have to be increased. I was surprised when he asked if I could start working the next week to which I replied with a big yes and a grateful handshake. What great news to share with my wife and my two small children!

The District Office was located in Metuchen. The building was an old diner that housed Engineering.

The attached former dining room housed the Right of way Office that was over crowded. This office was responsible for the acquisition of land for the construction of new roads, expansion of existing roads and public properties. Research and valuation was done manually and was time consuming. Today, most research is done with modern time saving technology.

Having to deal with all other transportation offices gave insight to engineering, construction, and other facets of transportation. From the aspect of employment and interaction with employees, it created one big family. We rejoiced with their successes and sympathized with them in times of sorrow.

When many of use took advantage of the buyouts we were aware that our family was in danger of destruction and that somehow, we needed glue to retain our friendships. The glue was Guy LoBue. He managed to assemble interested persons with the support of Commissioner Tom Downs. We agreed on an acronym of "DOTRA" We were overwhelmed with the response from the retirees.

Twenty-six years later we are still going strong. Membership is increasing, as is attendance at our lunches, dinners, picnics, bus trips etc. If you have not yet participated, why not renew family friendships by attending our DOTRA activities.

THANKS TO OUR DOTLINE EDITORS

PAST AND PRESENT

By Donna Troiano

As we celebrate our 100th DOTLine issue, it is important to recognize our accomplishments. We have been really fortunate at DOTRA. We were lucky enough to have one DOTLine newsletter editor for over 18 years (74 issues of DOTLine to be exact). Considering that this is not the most desired position on the board of directors (as evidenced by the turnovers we have experienced over the last few years) it was almost miraculous. Most of you will remember that our long-standing editor was Dot Andres. It was always easy to tell which articles were written by her. They never sounded like they were written by a reporter but more like they were

a letter written by a friend. Our gratitude goes out to Dot for her dedication and commitment to excellence over all of these many years. More recently we need to recognize these editors: Peter Yull, Bruce Strickland, and Frank Palise.

DOTRA TRIPS

By Jay Johnston

RADIO CITY CHRISTMAS SPECTACULAR

Starring the Rockettes

Join the Department of Transportation Retirees Association (DOTRA) to see the 2017 radio city Christmas Spectacular on November 30, 2017. Cost is \$109 pp checks made payable to DOTRA. Seats are first mezzanine. We will be leaving from the Starr parking located on Sloan avenue by the AMC theater at 9:15 am, and returning approximately 5:30 pm. This is the 85th year of the Christmas Spectacular and is always a great occasion to kick off the holiday season. Tickets sell out quickly. See attached flyer for details. **Any questions please call Jay @609-588-0930.**

DOTRA'S ANNUAL PICNIC

Join us for food, friendship, fun and laughs, including hamburgers, hotdogs, sausage, potato salad, cole slaw, beer, soda, water, coffee and of course desserts (feel free to bring a dessert). It will be held at the Mercer County Valley Road Picnic Grounds, near the old Belle Mountain Ski Area on Wednesday, September 13, 2017. The Cost is \$14:00 Per Person. See attached flyer for more details. **Any questions please call Mike Eckel at 609-694-0048**

DOTRA PROJECT OUT REACH

CONTACTING OUR MEMBERS

By Dot Andres

Sometimes we work at a snail's pace! But your mail finally reaches the right spot. In our appeal for news from our DOTRA retirees - got a lengthy note from **Bill Burd (Bridge Design)**. Since retirement, he has been busy with quite a few projects around the house - rebuilding, remodeling etc. and of course, devoting time and attention to his grand-daughters. Bill is very active with the Union Fire Company and Rescue Squad in Titusville - and has

DOTRA'S JUNE LUNCHEON

By Dot Andres

been a godsend to DOTRA with our Annual Picnic. Every year Bill comes through with supplying all the ice for DOTRA's picnic making sure there are COLD drinks for all. Thank you, Bill!! Along with the family and Rescue Squad activities, Bill delivers his church's food donations to the Lambertville Food Pantry. He and wife Sharon watch granddaughters five days a week. He's trying to figure out how to "bottle up some of their energy." Seems like you are doing a good job without it BILL! Like most DOTRA members, "he misses the workers and work, but not the bureaucratic stuff. Is that what BS stands for?" Amen to that. Good hearing from you Bill and thanks for sharing.

There was a note to Director Donna Troiano **from Bob Innocenzi (Asst. Comm.)** who is now living full time on Long Beach Island with wife Ann and in good health. Says they are spending the colder winter months in Naples Florida and hopes to make one of the Florida reunions soon.

Al Brenner (C&M Asst. Comm.) returned from Guatemala on May 15th. This trip was the 7th mission trip to Central America that Al has taken since 2010. The group of 20 missionaries traveled to Guatemala City where they worked on constructing the footing for a new church. The group also provided medical services for over 150 people and provided a vacation Bible School for over 100 children. Thank you, Al!!

Jim Rush (C&M) wrote to change his address to Phillipsburg, N.J. – not a far move. And, that's a reminder to us all --- if you have moved, have you contacted DOTRA??? If not - we do not know how to keep in touch with you. In this computerized society, you could be dropped from our Membership Roster. Many of you receive the DOTLine via your email address. We may not have your physical home address any longer, if you have not notified us. Please check your records - if not sure - drop us a line at "**DOTRA, PO BOX 77160, WEST TRENTON, NJ 08628**" and give us your address. We will confirm that the address in our DOTRA file is current.

A reminder- we DO NOT SHARE ANY ADDRESS OR PHONE INFORMATION OUTSIDE OF OUR BOARD!!!! We are proud of this record for over 25 years!!!!

At DOTRA's June Luncheon, we celebrated another anniversary year at Erini's restaurant in West Trenton on Tuesday, June 13th. We are now into our 26th year and publishing our 100th DOTLine!! There were 63 former DOTers and guests who attended a great Luncheon – arranged by Director Frank Stia. Our new President, Clint Griggs, emceed the event and welcomed the attendees. A few "new faces" were welcomed to the group along with many of our loyal supporters. We thank you all for your support at our functions. It's always great to see familiar faces again. It was good to see you all - new and old timers. President Clint Griggs graciously welcomed all and called for their continued support.

Do want to recognize some of the newcomers at the luncheon. We want to see you again at our events - Judy Semler, Marsha Mileski, Mike Immordino (Geo. Tech.), Ann Chmielewski (Procurement), Dave Chmielewski (Electrical), Joe Fasanella (Road Specs.), John and Kathy Barkley (Procurement), Lad Szeljic (Research), Diane Halko (Const. Serv.), Fran Davis (C&M - South), and Janet Morris (Design).

We wish to especially recognize Wilma Cimino (Design), who attended the Luncheon. Sadly, we just learned that Wilma passed away on July 12th! Wilma and husband Floyd were original members of DOTRA.

Many thanks to Frank Stia and Janis Stia for great arrangements at Erini's and keeping our Annual gatherings so successful.

If you weren't there - come to the next event – the Annual Picnic on September 13th – AND DROP US A LINE @ **DOTRAexpress@yahoo.com!!**

How about some more news from you DOTRA Members out there? We want to hear from you!

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