



C-FB RSPA

Carrollton-Farmers Branch Retired School Personnel Association

February 2021



From the President's Pen

Della Swaim

PLEASE HELP!

“CALLING COMPANIONS” NEEDED!

It is a fact. The Pandemic has caused many of us to feel isolated and in need of encouragement. I never expected that for myself, but that is exactly what has happened. Many of our C-FB RSPA members are feeling the same.

We are looking for as many volunteers as possible to commit to calling and befriending a select few (3-10) of our members on a regular basis for the next few months. It will not be complicated. You will choose the people you are willing to call (maybe even friends you already know) from a list with whom to visit. You will contact them by text or email to ask them to add you to their “contacts” so that they will know who it is when you call. And then you just chat with the same people regularly, 1-2 times a month to provide them and you with human contact and a friendly voice.

So, if you are willing to be a **CALLING COMPANION**, please text or email me your name and number and we will get you started. Thank you in advance for your caring heart!
Della Swaim, 214 926 6981.

Wednesday, February 17

Virtual Meeting via Zoom

The Zoom link/code will be emailed 2/13

Program: **Gardening - Kathy Anderson, Blooming Colors**

10:30-10:55 a.m. Login to Zoom

11:00 a.m. Meeting begins

Wear Red!

February Program

Pat Enlow

2nd Vice President (Programs),
Children's Book Project, Publicity,
Member TRTA District 10 Legislative Committee



It has been way too long since our December meeting with Jackie Payne! We miss you! I hope you will join us for our February meeting. We've had some warm, sunny, beautiful days the past couple of weeks and I know some of you are ready to get outside and get your flower beds ready for spring and summer.

Kathy Anderson of Blooming Colors will be our **February guest speaker**. We have enjoyed her enthusiastic presentations twice before. She always has such useful information concerning gardening and plant arranging. Remember her container gardening presentation with “thrill, fill, spill”? I hope you'll join us in welcoming Kathy who will bring some hope, cheer, and beautiful ideas!



Upcoming 2020-2021 Meetings

February 17, 2021 (online via Zoom)

Gardening with Kathy Anderson, Blooming Colors

April 21, 2021 (online via Zoom)

TBD

May 19, 2021 (online via Zoom)

TRTA District 10 News and Installation of Officers
with Sandra Barber, President of TRTA District 10





Children's Book Project: **A Book a Child**

Pat Enlow, 2nd Vice President (Programs),
Children's Book Project, Publicity,
Member TRTA District 10 Legislative Committee

Although COVID did not allow us to deliver books in May 2020, we were able to make that delivery on December 9, 2020! We delivered 2,820 books to Country Place, Kent, McKamy, McLaughlin/Strickland, Rainwater, and Rosemeade Elementaries.



Thank you to **GAIL SCHWAMB, Al and Pat Enlow, Della Swaim, Lori Smith, Darcy Perreault, Kay Edmondson, Linda Tole, Linda Bambina, Wanda Patterson, and Shaima Haikimi** for stepping up to help with delivery. You are so much appreciated! We had some great conversations with principals. They really do appreciate us and our continued support of students, parents, and teachers through our **A Book a Child** Children's Book Project.

We were featured on the C-FB ISD Newsletter "crawl", some school websites, and on our Facebook page. See photos on page 6 of this newsletter.



News from the Treasurer

Judy Carey, Treasurer

Happy 2021 to everyone. I can not believe it has been a year since our last in-person meeting. Collecting dues over the past year has been slower than before, mainly because we have not been meeting in person. If you are one of the members who has not paid your state and local dues for 2020-2021, you still have time. Just mail me a check made out to C-FB RSPA, in the amount of \$45.00. My address is 975 Laguna Drive, Coppell, TX 75019. Questions about your dues, call (214-498-9867) or email me judy.carey@verizon.net.

Beginning March 1, 2021, we start collecting dues for 2021-2022. Many of you would normally be paying your state and local dues at our February meeting. Please consider sending me a check for those dues now. That way you will be current on your dues for another year. If you have your dues taken out of your annuity or bank draft, all you owe is your local dues in the amount of \$10.00. This \$10.00 comes out to \$0.027 a day and keeps C-FB RSPA functioning.

One more important item, if you have changes in your information such as address, phone number, etc., please let me know. We like to have current information for all members.



Pre-Retirement Seminar Saturday, Feb. 20, 2021

Mary Eisenmann,
Retirement Education

Your friends who are still working in CFBISD have received emails in December and early January in their district email about the TRS Retirement Seminar that will be held **via Zoom** on Saturday, February 20, 9 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. We are glad to have friends who still serve kids in schools. However, if you have friends who plan to retire within the next five years, you might check to see if they have registered to come. They will find this informative. Also be sure to tell them about our local C-FB RSPA.

To register, have them go to TRTA.org. Select CALENDAR. Then click on Retirement Education Events. Select the District 10, Feb 20 Richardson, CFB, Duncanville, Grand Prairie event. On the next screen, sign in or create an account. If one is a member of TRTA, sign in with TRTA membership number. If not, just create an account. Be sure to SAVE RESPONSES, PROCEED TO CHECKOUT, and SUBMIT to be officially registered.

Questions? Email Mary.eisenmann@gmail.com



Legislative Report

Pat Enlow, 2nd Vice President (Programs),
Children's Book Project, Publicity, Member
TRTA District 10 Legislative Committee

The 87th Texas Legislative Session began January 12 and runs through May 31, 2021. Your 4th Quarter (2020) **The Voice** TRTA magazine has excellent information as does Tim Lee's newsletters, **The Inside Line**. Please read these as they give you the most up-to-date information.

TRTA District 10 Presidents and Legislative Chairs met January 28. It has been determined that letters (snail mail) and phone calls are most effective in getting the attention of legislators. I will be sending you Sample Letters that you can print, fill in, and send to your legislators. **PLEASE** reach out to your legislators in some way. **Go to TRTA.org and click on Find Your Legislators' Contact Information.** Here, you can find who your legislators are along with their contact information. It takes just a few minutes and truly makes a difference. Remember, the outpouring of letters and phone calls that led to the Special Session that funded our health care during the 85th Legislative Session?

****We need ALL HANDS ON DECK! I am in the process of scheduling virtual Zoom meetings with legislators.** More info will come via email, but if you are asked to attend your legislators' meetings, please be there for all of us!

Please see the 2021 Legislative Priorities sheet on page 5 of this newsletter.

Sunshine

Kathy McWhorter



Please notify me if you know of a member who is ill or needs a note of encouragement!

kathymcwhorter@verizon.net

Healthy Living

Carol Sprawls



February is Heart Health Month! Some of the best ways to keep the heart healthy are to eat a balanced diet, get daily exercise, and maintain a healthy body weight. We all know that drill, and many from our group are putting the exercise part into practice by participating in WALK ACROSS TEXAS (WAT).

WAT is a walking challenge for each 8-member team to walk collectively 834 miles, from Channing in the northwest to the southernmost city, Brownsville. We have five teams from our local chapter consisting of 40 people, mostly from our group, plus some friends/relatives. Our five WAT captains are doing a fabulous job of leading their teammates with the following team names.



Cathy Webb – Peaceful Pacers

Lori McCall – Eight Maids a Marching

Linda Bambina – Red Hot Chili Steppers 2

Becki Tucker – Ewokers

Kay Griffin – Vee Texas Steppers

And finally, a few HEART jokes to release those endorphins!



- Why didn't the skeleton feel like patching up his broken ribcage?
His heart wasn't in it!
- What do you call it when a cardiology student flunks a final exam?
Heart failure!
- Why did the pianist have to be rushed into surgery after his concert?
He played his heart out!



Take Care

Linda Bambina
Information & Protective Services

For those of you who have been a CAREGIVER through the pandemic or longer, please read these “tips” of what you already know—paying special attention to #3. Your friends really DO care, other family members and church friends and even your neighbors genuinely want to help....

Ten Tips for Family Caregivers

1. Seek support from others, you are not alone.
2. Take care of your own health so that you can be strong enough to take care of your loved one.
3. **Accept offers of help and suggest specific things people can do to help you.**
4. Learn how to communicate effectively with doctors.
<https://www.caregiveraction.org/resources/how-talk-your-doctor>
5. Caregiving is hard work so take respite breaks.
6. Watch out for signs of depression and don't delay getting professional help when you need it.
7. Be open to new technologies that can help you care for your loved one.
https://nfca.typepad.com/pluggedin_caregiving/
8. Organize medical information so it is up to date and easy to find.
9. Make sure legal documents are in order.
10. Give yourself credit for doing the best you can in one of the toughest jobs there is!

Source: Caregiver Action Network
<https://www.caregiveraction.org/>



How to participate in a Zoom online meeting

Lyn Abercrombie, Tech Chair

Our Spring meetings will all be via Zoom as an online meeting. If you have never participated in a Zoom meeting, please keep reading.

In order to participate in a Zoom meeting, you will need either (A.) a computer/laptop with a speaker (so you can hear) and microphone (needed only if you will want to ask a question), (B.) a tablet/iPad or “smart” cell phone (these always come with a camera and microphone built in), or (C.) a flip phone or a regular house phone.



If you are using Methods A or B above, when I email the link/code for the Zoom meeting (a few days before the meeting), you will want to click on the link ahead of time and it will prompt you to download the Zoom app. Then, your device will be ready for the actual meeting.

If you have done Zoom before, at the meeting time you will simply click on the link or input the code.

If you will be participating by Method C—using a simple telephone—you will simply call a number (which I will provide), listen to the prompts and input the info I'll be giving you a few days before the meeting, then you will be able to hear everything that is said, you'll be able to ask a question, but you will NOT be able to see anything.

Be aware that everyone at the Zoom meeting can hear if your dog barks or your TV is on in the background, or if a family member asks you a question. **Plan to Mute yourself** unless you have something to say (then, you would un-mute yourself). To mute/unmute with Method C (a simple telephone), use *6 (star six).



If you have questions, please call/text me, Lyn Abercrombie, at 214-603-3314 or email me at lyn2don@yahoo.com.

C-FB RSPA Website

Our C-FB RSPA website has helpful information and photos!



**Our new address
(as of Summer 2020) is
cfbrspa.atwebpages.com**



STATE ISSUES

★ TRS Pension Fund

ACTION ITEM: Preserve the funding plan enacted during the 86th Legislature (SB 12)

- Keep the TRS pension fund on the path to actuarial soundness
- Ensure SB 12 phase-in plan raising contribution rates to 8% for state/educators, and 1.8% for ISDs by 2022

ACTION ITEM: Secure a financial structure capable of providing a future COLA

- Average TRS monthly annuity is \$2096
- Half of all TRS annuitants receive less than \$1800 per month
- Members retiring during the last 16 years have never had a permanent increase in their annuity
- Consider additional revenue source by requiring all employers to contribute equally

★ TRS-Care

ACTION ITEM: Maintain contribution for TRS-Care retiree health insurance

- Vulnerability to COVID-19 necessitates affordable, easy access to doctors and care
- Avoid increased premiums and cuts in services or benefits
- Study and design long term funding structure
- Allow one-time re-enrollment to TRS-Care

★ Sunset Review

ACTION ITEM: Adopt TRS Sunset Staff Report and additional TRTA recommendations*

- Promote a member-focused and friendly culture at TRS
- Direct TRS to designate an FTE position as a TRS member ombudsman focused on the needs and issues of TRS members, including the impact of COVID-19
- Direct TRS to simplify and clearly define reasonable rules for return to work and part time employees
- Create appeals process for disallowed health care claims

**See TRTA Position Paper for TRS Sunset recommendations and TRTA recommendations*

FEDERAL ISSUES

★ Social Security

ACTION ITEM: Ensure earned Social Security benefits are paid to retirees

- Reform WEP and GPO current formulas that unfairly penalize Texas retired educators
- Retirees' traditional supplemental income has been impacted by pandemic (substitute teaching, bus driving)
- Prevent mandatory Social Security as a resolution to the inequity of WEP and GPO





December 2020 Meeting via Zoom
 Holiday Entertainment with Jackie Payne, as we sing along!



Children's Book Project – Dec 2020



More photos and other information at our website: cfbrspa.atwebpages.com