



From the President's Pen

Lee Nitcholas, President



Your executive board has been busy planning activities for the spring, and by the looks of the weather it is already here. I understand some of you have azaleas blooming. Love the beautiful days; just hope a hard freeze doesn't ruin our gardens.

We have made some changes on the board. Debbie Moss will be doing door prizes beginning this month. (Welcome Debbie.) Both Nilda Mollica and Barbara Gilbert have responsibilities that prevent them from continuing in that capacity. Leta Nelson is in California for the time being and has asked us to name a new Legislative Chairperson. Pat Enlow will be the interim chair until the position is filled and Leta will remain on the committee. Thanks to all of these people for doing a great job; we appreciate your work on our behalf.

This is an important time for us politically and we need someone to take the legislative reins; please let me know if you are interested in chairing the committee. We have begun to organize groups to meet with candidates. The goal at this time is to make our presence known to them and ask questions regarding their platforms. Mary Eisenmann, Judy Thurman and I met with candidate for state rep, Bennett Ratliff, a few days ago, and we are trying to set up a meeting with Ratliff's opponent, Matt Rinaldi, prior to our next meeting. Pat Enlow, Lyn Abercrombie, and Della Swaim are meeting with Ron Simmons, candidate for senator. If you would like to join a group contact Pat Enlow who is organizing them.

Bennett Ratliff was very responsive to our causes. He is supportive on all points we discussed concerning retirees as well as educational issues in general. He was on the Coppell School Board for nine years and has three children who attended CISD schools. He worked with TRTA's Tim Lee and others to pass the legislation that made our annuity fund actuarially sound resulting in the first increase in monthly checks in over twelve years for many of our members. We found him to be very proactive on the issues. He not only supports our causes he also continues to look to the future and search for solutions.



February Program

Webb Chapel Church of Christ, Farmers Branch
Pat Enlow, 2nd VP, Programs

Is one of your New Year's resolutions to revive and beautify your yard and garden? Then you will want to attend our RSPA meeting on Wednesday, February 17, at Webb Chapel Church of Christ! **Michelle Thompson, Manager of Calloways Nursery in Lewisville will present "Prepping for Spring Gardening."** It's always fun to look forward to spring and the beauty of new plants and flowers. *"I think that no matter how old I may become, I will always plant a garden in the spring. Who can resist the feelings of hope and joy that one gets from participating in nature's rebirth?"* - Edward Giobbi

See you Wednesday, February 17, at Webb Chapel Church of Christ, Farmers Branch. Social time begins at 11:00 a.m. and lunch/meeting begins at 11:30.

Metrocrest Food Pantry

Florida Jossel

May is the month that we have designated to focus on the food pantry. That is the month they prepare for all the students that will be home during the summer. I am learning just how much is being done by Metrocrest Services; it is a much larger operation than I thought some years ago. I have found that there are many opportunities for volunteering.

So, don't bring anything this month, but when you are looking for somewhere to volunteer, consider contacting them at 972-446-2100 or metrocrestservices.org.

Field Trips

Beth Sargent, Terrie Grimes, Suzi Urban

Celebrating St. Pat's or not, you will not want to miss our field trip to the Bishop Arts District on Thursday, March 17.

At 9:30 a.m. we'll meet at the Church of Christ on Webb Chapel and carpool from there to the Farmers Branch DART station, take the train to downtown, then a bus to the Bishop Arts District. We will browse boutique shops and have lunch at one of its many famous restaurants. Note: there will be a lot of walking. We'll be returning about 2:30 p.m.

There will be a sign-up sheet at our meeting on February 17. If you will not be able to attend that meeting, and you are interested, text me with your name and cell phone number at 214-789-9612, or email me at bsarg1923@tx.rr.com, or call me at 972-394-0351. Remember to wear your green on March 17.

Membership

Della Swaim, VP for Membership

It feels like forever since our last meeting! I look forward to seeing all of you on February 17th at the Webb Chapel Church of Christ (lunch \$7). I hope you will attend and wear something pretty and bright (preferably red) to ward off the winter doldrums.

On a more serious note, I hope you will contact your friends who are education retirees or are planning to retire this school year and invite them to join our C-FB RSPA chapter. Our Texas Legislators look at our membership numbers when they consider our requests concerning our insurance needs and our TRS retirement fund. The more members we have, the more seriously they take us. When you recommend someone for membership, your name is entered into a drawing for \$100 which is given away each year in our RSPA district. Besides, it is fun to have our friends in RSPA with us! I understand one of our members won the \$100 a couple of years ago. This year it could be you! The contest is called "Each One Bring One."

So, invite a friend and get your reservations in by 5 p.m. on Wednesday, February 10th. Call, text or email me with your full name: jldhswaim@gmail.com, 214-926-6981. And remember to cancel those reservations if something comes up that prevents you from attending. See you on February 17th!

Community Volunteer Service

Kay Edmondson

- Volunteer hours are reported from January through December each year.
- Volunteer hours are reported for any service you provide without pay.
- MAXIMUM NUMBER OF HOURS THAT CAN BE REPORTED IS 12 HOURS/DAY.
- Travel time is included in the hours reported--from the time you leave home until you return.
- Email volunteer hours to: Kay Edmondson at mce60@verizon.net
- Volunteer Hours Reported in 2015: 46 members contributed 26,168.25 hours.

Numbers Do Count...in public relations with taxpayers.

Numbers Do Count...with Legislators when the value of education retirees' volunteerism is considered during legislative negotiations.

Meeting dates for 2015-2016

February 17 – Webb Chapel Church of Christ, Farmers Branch

April 20 – CHRISTUS St. Joseph Village, Coppell

May 18 – Webb Chapel Church of Christ, Farmers Branch



It's That Time Again Dues for 2016-2017

Judy Carey, Treasurer

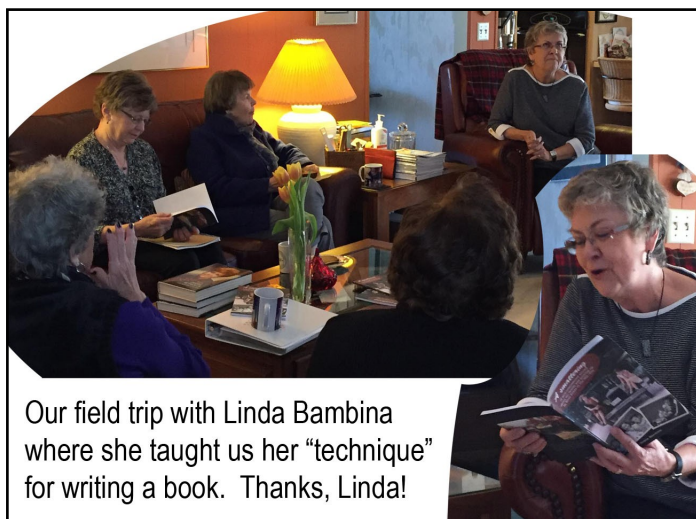
Happy 2016 to everyone. It's that time again to start thinking about paying your dues for 2016-2017. Starting March 1, 2016 your state and local dues are due, again. March 1 is the beginning of TRTA's membership drive. State dues will be \$35.00 and local dues will be \$10.00. **The total amount of your dues will be \$45.00.**

The earlier you pay your dues the easier my job will be as your treasurer. We have several of you who are "Associate Members," which mean you were still working when you joined. If any of you have retired recently, please let me know so I can move your membership to "Member."

We also have many of you who pay your state dues to TRTA or have state dues taken out of your annuity. PLEASE consider paying your local dues of \$10.00. We need local dues to run our organization. Without local dues C-FB RSPA would not exist. Ten dollars comes out to \$0.027 a day.

When paying your dues make out your check to C-FB RSPA. If you pay your dues with cash, please put the cash in an envelope with your name on the envelope, and give it to me at the meeting. It is always helpful to have your check filled out before you arrive at the meeting. This speeds up the check-in process.

Hope to see all of you at our next meeting. You can always mail dues for 2016-2017 to me: Judy Carey, 975 Laguna Dr., Coppell, TX 75019. If I can answer any questions, please call me at 972-393-2956.



Our field trip with Linda Bambina where she taught us her "technique" for writing a book. Thanks, Linda!

Health Care Opportunity

Barb Shell Fletcher and Joyce Wagner
Health Committee

All of us should strive to stay healthy. To that end, Lakeview at Josey Ranch Senior Independent Retirement Center is sponsoring a Health Fair. Here are the details:

Come to Lakeview's **U Health Fair** and learn from over 30 vendors: oral care, hearing, blood pressure, balance, glucose, medication interaction, adjustments to assistant devices, massage, elder law, reflexology, nutrition, heart attack and stroke awareness, and more!

Saturday, February 20, 2016

11 a.m. - 2 p.m.

**Lakeview at Josey Ranch, 2105 N. Josey Ln.
Carrollton, TX 75006**

Lectures

11 a.m. *How to Use Your Insurance Benefits*
June Kim with Blue Cross Blue Shield

11:45 a.m. *Hearing Loss is Not Just about the Ears: Connections with other Health Issues*
Dr. Amy Badstubner with Elite Audiology

12:30 p.m. *How Your Oral Health affects Your Overall Health*, Dr. Skaggs with Josey Lane Dentistry

1:15 p.m. *Dementia Awareness*
Edwin Villareal with ComForCare

For more information, call Kimmy at 972-466-4433.

So mark your calendars! We hope you will take advantage of this opportunity! See you there!

TRTA MEMBER BENEFITS

Mary Eisenmann



Association Member Benefits Advisors (AMBA)

Long-term care policy, Medicare supplement plans, dental and vision plans at group rates. To learn more, call 1.800.258.7041 or visit www.myAMBAbenefits.info/trta.

Texas Mobile Imaging

Three cardiovascular ultrasounds for the early detection and prevention of stroke. Call 1.832.437.1296 to learn more.

Acadian on Call

Provides medical alert systems to over 19,000 subscribers nationwide and ranks in top 10 U.S. medical alert alarm companies. Use code TRTA for free shipping. 1.800.259.1234 or visit www.acadianmedicalalerts.com/trta.html.

Medical Air Services Association (MASA)

Administered by AMBA, MASA is a national and international emergency assistance association designed to return a person home after an illness or an injury. Call 1.800.258.7041 or visit www.myambabenefits.info/trta.

Hearing Aid Express

Statewide network of hearing health care professionals. Member benefits include complimentary hearing tests and 10% off hearing aid prices. Call 1.866.478.8782 or visit www.hearingaidexpress.com.

NEW: American Hearing Benefits

Convenience for retirees and their families with many credentialed provider locations in Texas. Benefits include exclusive discounts, free annual hearing consultations, a free supply of batteries, a 60-day trial period, and a free warranty (including loss and damage). Code "AMBA" 1.800.258.7041 or visit www.myAMBAbenefits.info/trta.

Private Practice Educators Professional Liability Insurance

Insurance available through the John A. Barclay Agency, Inc. for qualified TRTA administrators or educators returning to work in capacities other than the classroom. The \$1,000,000 policy is available for an annual charge of \$265. Visit www.trta.org to enroll or call 512.476.6566.

John A. Barclay Agency

Professional Liability Insurance for the classroom. Standard \$1,000,000 policy available for an annual fee of \$39. Call 1.800.880.1650 to learn more.

Retirement Education

Kay Justus

An Educational Retirement Seminar is scheduled for Saturday, February 6, 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. in Richardson at RISD Professional Development Center, 701 W. Belt Line Rd, Richardson 75080. The event is sponsored by Richardson Retired School Personnel and Carrollton-Farmers Branch Retired School Personnel Association. It is hosted by the Credit Union of Texas. TRS speakers will present the program and provide comprehensive handouts and forms. Reservations have been made throughout January, and are now closed.

Voting Facts

FACT #1 - February 1 is the deadline to register to vote in the March 1 Texas primary elections.

FACT #2 - The primaries and primary run-offs are most likely to affect our legislative goals. Candidates NOT favorable to ensuring our pension/healthcare benefits are those supported or endorsed by Empower Texas, Texans for Fiscal Responsibility, Texas Public Policy Foundation, and Home School groups.

FACT #3 - You can vote in either party's primary/run-off elections, and still vote for anyone you choose in the general election in the fall.

FACT #4 - Critical Texas Senate and House races will be decided in the primary/run-off elections.

If you are over 65, you can request a mail-in ballot; the deadline is February 19.

We are so privileged to be able to elect our lawmakers - Let's all be sure to GET OUT AND VOTE!

(Thanks to Betty Rutledge, President, McKinney Area SRA)