



## From the President's Pen

Lee Nitcholas

C-FB RSPA is a local unit of TRTA. TRTA President Nancy Byler sends us her congratulations for achieving over

81,000 members this year, a new record. (See below) I would like to add my congratulations to our Membership Chair and 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, Della Swaim, as well as all our members for increasing membership in C-FB RSPA to a record high as well. At this date we have 309 members, up from 294 this time last year. Way to go!!!

### From Nancy Byler, TRTA President

On January 19, the Texas Retired Teachers Association (TRTA) went over the **81,000+** mark in membership for the first time ever! Without our local members, this would not have happened! **Our numbers do talk when visiting with our legislators.** Again – **THANK YOU to EVERYONE** that worked to recruit new members! But remember, all local members need to continue working to increase our membership. Imagine how effective we could be if each of us recruited just one member?

On January 24, the Texas Senate Finance Committee will begin discussions on TRS and TRS-Care health insurance. Tim Lee, TRTA's Executive Director, will be testifying on our behalf, but each of us can show our support by responding to the [January 19th Inside Line](#) with emails to our State senators. We need more funds to keep the program solvent!

I look forward to seeing each of you at our state convention March 27-28 in Austin. Business will be conducted, training for the coming year will be done and we will also have a good time visiting with each other! **March 29 is Rally Day!** If you cannot attend the convention, we hope you are planning to put that red shirt on and come to the capitol with us!

Note that although the deadline for our letters referred to in President Byler's letter has passed we will continue to send letters as the legislative session continues until we have a resolution.



## February 15<sup>th</sup> Program

Webb Chapel Church of Christ  
13425 Webb Chapel, Farmers Branch

Pat Enlow, 2nd VP, Programs

Oh, my! With our "rollercoaster" weather it is difficult to know when, where, and what to plant to achieve the look we want for our yards. **Tom McLaughlin** from **Calloways Nursery, Lewisville**, has the answers! He will be sharing his tips, ideas, and advice. This is always one of our favorite programs, so don't miss out! See you February 15. Spring, here we come!



Social hour begins at 11:00 and program/lunch begins at 11:30. Lunch \$10. **RSVP by Wednesday, Feb. 8<sup>th</sup> to Della Swaim by text: 214-926-6981 or email: [jldhswaim@gmail.com](mailto:jldhswaim@gmail.com).**

Below are pictures from our December meeting. More photos are visible here: <http://www.localunits.org/CFBRSPA/assets/Image/2016/2016December%20meeting.jpg>



**Meeting dates remaining for 2016-2017**

**Feb 15** – Webb Chapel Church of Christ, Farmers Branch  
**April 19** – CHRISTUS St. Joseph Village, Coppell  
**May 17** – Webb Chapel Church of Christ, Farmers Branch



## Membership

Della Swaim, VP for Membership

Love is in the air!.....at least we hope that the members of the Texas Legislature find some love in their hearts for Texas educators this spring. Remember that your voice counts. **Please respond with a letter or an email to your Legislators when the “Legislative Alerts” are sent out.** Also, our membership numbers speak loudly to those legislators. TRTA currently has over 81,000 members. **Please keep current with your state and local dues so that our numbers stay strong.** If you are not sure if you are current, Judy Carey can give you that information.

All of us know local retired educators who have not yet joined TRTA. Please forward this newsletter link to those educators, ask them to attend our February meeting, and add a word of personal invitation. Also, when you hear that someone you know is planning to retire this year, please contact them and invite them to consider joining C-FB RSPA. They can join as an Associate Member now, and will be classified as full members after their retirement. If you will send me their personal email, I will contact them before our September meeting. **IT IS UP TO ALL OF US TO KEEP OUR ORGANIZATION STRONG!**

**When someone you invite joins C-FB RSPA, you are entered into Region 10’s drawing for \$100.00, and also entered into C-FB RSPA’s drawing for a \$50.00 gift card!** You will receive one chance for each new member you recommend! You are all great at inviting your friends. Thank you! Keep it up!

### Welcome to our recent new members:

Patti Fair	Jeanne Niemiste
Dara Stewart	Kathi Sullivan
Mollie Young	



## News from the Treasurer

### It’s Time to Pay Dues for 2017-2018

Judy Carey, Treasurer

Happy 2017 to everyone. It’s that time again to start thinking about paying your dues for 2017-2018. Starting March 1, 2017 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 members 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 members who pay their state dues to TRTA or have state dues taken out of their annuity. PLEASE consider paying your local dues of \$10.00 —that comes out to \$ 0.027 a day. We need local dues to run our organization. Without local dues C-FB RSPA would not exist.

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 2017-2018 to me, Judy Carey, at **975 Laguna Dr., Coppell, TX 75019**. If I can answer any questions, please call me at 972-393-2956.

## Children's Book Project

Pat Enlow, 2nd VP, Book Project

It's February and what better way to share a little **LOVE** than to encourage our children to **READ**? At our meeting this month, there will be a "**Giving Bag**" on each table. Please help C-FB RSPA continue this important Children's Book Project with your donation. A suggestion we've used in the past is to donate a **\$1** for each year you worked in education. For me, that's **\$37**!! Of course, any amount is welcomed and appreciated. These donations will be used for our 2016-2017 book purchases and for future purchases.

With your contributions, we will be able to give 2,248 new books—one for each child to keep—to Blair, Blanton, Farmers Branch, Sheffield Primary and Intermediate schools. These books will be delivered in May. I remember, as a child (and still love), the thrill of getting a new book!

**Gail Schwamb** and **Carrie Bodle** have been the driving force behind this effort. Share a **HUG** with them at the meeting for all the hours and effort they have given.



### Field Trips

Beth Sargent, Suzi Urban, Linda Frith, Linda Winkenhofer

April 5 (Wednesday)

Magnolia Market at the Silos, Waco

June

*(date to be determined)*

Texas Rangers' Game



January field trip to Dallas Museum of Art

See more photos of this field trip:

<http://www.localunits.org/CFBRSPA/assets/Image/2016/2017%20Jan-Dls%20Museum%20Art.jpg>

## Stay Informed and Be an Activist

Nichie Hoskins, Legislative Co-chair



As retired teachers, we need to know what's going on in our Texas Legislature, because how they vote can affect our income.

*Right now there is a big chance that our healthcare premium could more than double if we sit quietly and do nothing.* The legislators are also voting on the use of vouchers to allow people to use our tax money for private schools. That will suck even more money from our already under-funded public education funds.

We **all** need to write to our legislators to support our fellow retired teachers and our school districts.

TRTA members interested in email updates on issues pertaining to pension, health insurance, Social Security, and other hot topics should sign up for **Inside Line**. These email updates are written by Tim Lee, TRTA Executive Director, and offer facts and opinions on the issues facing current and future education retirees. These facts and opinions can be used as talking points when we write our letters. Here is a link that will take you to the TRTA web page where you can sign up for the email updates: <http://trta.org/features/insideline/>

Also, you can download an app on your phone called **TEXLEGE**. It will give you all kinds of information about your legislators: what committees they are on, the issues in this session, the legislators' past voting records, district boundaries, local office addresses, phone numbers, email addresses, and much more.



The more informed we are of the issues, the more of a chance we have to influence our legislators before they vote. They **must hear from us** to know how we feel.

### Sunshine

Kathy McWhorter

[kathymcwhorter@verizon.net](mailto:kathymcwhorter@verizon.net)

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





## January is National Glaucoma Awareness Month

Barb Shell Fletcher & Joyce Wagner, Health Co-Chairs

Everyone is at risk for glaucoma; however, certain groups are at higher risk than others. People at high risk for glaucoma should get a complete eye exam, including eye dilation, every one or two years. The following are groups at higher risk for developing glaucoma:

**African Americans:** After cataracts, glaucoma is the leading cause of blindness among African Americans and people of African descent.

**People over 60:** You are six times more likely to get glaucoma if you are over 60 years old.

**Family Members with Glaucoma:** The most common type of glaucoma, primary open-angle glaucoma, is hereditary.

**Hispanics in Over-60 Age Group:** Recent studies indicate that the risk for Hispanic populations is greater than those of predominately European ancestry.

**Asians:** People of Asian descent appear to be at increased risk for angle-closure glaucoma. Angle-closure glaucoma accounts for less than 10% of all diagnosed cases of glaucoma.

**Steroid Users:** Some evidence links steroid use to glaucoma. A 1997 study, reported in the Journal of American Medical Association, demonstrated a 40% increase in the incidence of ocular hypertension and open-angle glaucoma in adults who required approximately 14 to 35 puffs of steroid inhaler to control asthma.

**Eye Injury:** Injury to the eye may cause secondary open-angle glaucoma. This type of glaucoma can occur immediately or years later. Blunt injuries that “bruise” the eye or injuries that penetrates the eye can damage the drainage system, leading to glaucoma.

**Other risk factors** include nearsightedness, hypertension and central corneal thickness less than .5mm.

You are invited to the Health Fair at **Lakeview at Josey Ranch**, Feb. 24, 11 a.m.-2 p.m. More information to follow.

Stay healthy! Exercise, exercise, exercise!!!

## View us on the Web!



Our C-FB Retired School Personal Association has a website with helpful information and photos!

The address is [localunits.org/CFBRSPA](http://localunits.org/CFBRSPA)  
Please note: if you are typing that address into your browser, you must use capital letters for CFBRSPA.

## Volunteer Hours For 2017

Kay Edmondson

This is a reminder for you to **count your Volunteer Hours** and email Kay Edmondson with your count. [mce60@verizon.net](mailto:mce60@verizon.net)

The State of Texas likes to know how many hours retired school personnel give back to the community.

Count obvious things such as volunteering as a school mentor as well as counting hours spent babysitting grandchildren and care-taking ill family members; even count the hours driving to and from such tasks.

Hours are counted from January 1 – December 31, 2017.

Keep track of your volunteer hours and report them monthly or in a lump sum at the end of the year. Thank you!



## TRTA Member Benefits

Jan/Feb 2017 Super Deals & Great Discounts

### 1-800-Flowers Discount

Save 15% at 1-800-FLOWERS.COM! Members use promotion code AMBA to receive their discount by calling 1-800-FLOWERS or visiting [www.1800FLOWERS.com](http://www.1800FLOWERS.com).

### LODGING BENEFITS:

#### Drury Inn & Suites

TRTA members receive 5% discount off [Drury's](#) corporate rates at the more than 100 Drury Inn & Suites in nineteen states (discounts are not available when hotels are on "peak status"). Amenities include a hot breakfast of scrambled eggs, sausage, biscuits & gravy, Belgian waffles & more, one hour of free long distance per room per night, evening beverages and snacks from 5:30-7 p.m. and high-speed internet access in every room and wireless lobby. To make reservations, call 1.800.378.7946 and provide Corporate ID #311435 or visit [www.druryhotels.com](http://www.druryhotels.com) and use BizTrip Corporate ID #311435.

#### La Quinta Inns & Suites

TRTA members receive up to a 10 % discount off La Quinta Inn and Suites best available rates nationwide. Go to [www.LQ.com/TRTA](http://www.LQ.com/TRTA) to book your next stay. You may call 1.800.753.3757 to reserve over the phone and mention code "TRTA." Discounts are subject to availability and blackout dates may apply.

#### Car Rental Discounts

Avis Rent-A-Car (1.800.331.1212)  
Budget Rent-A-Car (1.800.527.0700)  
Enterprise Rent-A-Car (1.800.736.8227)

Always ask for senior discounts and visit [www.trta.org/memberbenefits](http://www.trta.org/memberbenefits) for all TRTA benefits.

### INSURANCE:

#### Association Member Benefits Advisors

Provides Long Term Care/Home Health Care insurance; 1st Diagnosis Cancer, Heart Attack and Stroke insurance; cancer Treatment insurance, Medicare Supplement; Final Expense Whole Life, and Tax-Differed Annuities.  
Visit [www.myAMBAbenefits.info/trta](http://www.myAMBAbenefits.info/trta) or 1.800.258.7041 to learn more.

#### Ameritas Group Dental Insurance

Freedom to use any dentist and no network required. Routine cleanings and exams are part of the plan and there are no referrals required for specialty care. For plan information/billings call 1.800.258.7041 and to locate a network dentist in your area call 1.888.239.3336. You can obtain additional information concerning dental benefits at [www.myAMBAbenefits.info/trta](http://www.myAMBAbenefits.info/trta).

#### MetLife Auto & Home @ Insurance

Special group discounts on home insurance, renter's insurance. To learn more, call 1.877.491.5089.

#### Nationwide Pet Insurance

Nationwide pet insurance provides association members with a 5 percent discount on new pet insurance policies. To learn more, visit [www.petinsurance.com/amba](http://www.petinsurance.com/amba).

For specific information or updates visit [www.trta.org/memberbenefits](http://www.trta.org/memberbenefits).

## Take Care

Linda Bambina  
Information & Protective Services



The official title for my "committee of one" is Informative and Protective Services. Too much. At least for me. Gotta keep it simple in my way-too-busy-retirement-life!

So "Take Care" it will be. At least for the newsletter!

I get four pages a month of things to warn you about. Scams, fraud, recalls, natural disasters, criminal activity and potential accidents. I'm not kidding. I'm COPYING the first line off the info sheet!

So let me share some BIGGIES from one of the multiple pages of great ideas that I recently got:

### Modify your passwords with some simple tricks:

Add CAPITAL letters in an odd or middle place.  
Add symbols %#@ between words or at the end  
Think of a sentence (now this is a WILD ONE to me) that means something to you and then take the first letter of each of the words to be your password. This mnemonic method would be incredibly safe!

OH and don't carry your list of passwords in your wallet or purse!

*Take care.....Linda Bambina*



Come join us to see "Bye Bye Birdie"  
Saturday afternoon (1/2 price!)—either  
February 25 or March 4.

I'll have a "I'm-interested-sign-up-sheet" available at our next meeting with the understanding that I'll be in touch and we'll organize from there.

Maybe lunch first, maybe not.

Or email me now: Linda Bambina,  
[lindabambina42@gmail.com](mailto:lindabambina42@gmail.com)

The Firehouse Theatre is an amazing Award-Winning  
Community Theatre.

Please support all us crazy volunteers!  
(Actors and crew, too!)