



From the President's Pen

Della Swaim

The TRTA State Convention in San Antonio was informative, and we were very busy attending classes! Pat Enlow, Mary Eisenmann, Nichie Hoskins, Judy Carey, Lee Nitcholas, and I attended. We had a surprise visit and speech during the Opening Ceremonies from Lieutenant Governor Dan Patrick. We were polite but **unusually** silent! Tim Lee gave a rousing, passionate speech, and we were anything BUT quiet! Ha! I hope that TRTA will put a link to Tim's speech on the state website so that all of you can watch it! He really knows how to turn a phrase.

Last Monday, thirteen of your Executive Board Members attended the District 10 Spring Leadership Conference. It was a chance for us to attend classes and learn more about our jobs on the C-FB RSPA Board. It was also a time for us to meet other local officers from throughout District 10. We were in charge of door prizes, and that went very smoothly. April couldn't have been any busier!

I have some good news to share with you! Last month we applied for a grant for our **A Book a Child** Book Fund from **The Credit Union of Texas**, and they have given us \$1,500.00 to finish paying for the books that we will distribute to C-FBISD students this spring! You will be able to read about the services that this organization has to offer in our next few newsletters. Please help us thank them for this generous gift with your patronage.

It's May again! Do you know someone who's planning to retire from a school job this year? Forward to them this newsletter—along with a personal invitation from you—inviting them to join you as a member of C-FB RSPA. TRTA has grown to over 88,000 members this year from 82,000 last year! And our local chapter now has around 320 members. Many active employees don't know that they need to be proactive and join TRTA to keep abreast of what is happening with their TRS retirement fund and their insurance program. So, touch base with them, get their home email addresses, and invite them to join our group. Thank you for all you do to build our organization!

DON'T FORGET TO GO TO YOUR COUNTY WEBSITE, ENTER YOUR ZIP CODE, PRINT OUT A SAMPLE BALLOT, DO YOU RESEARCH, AND VOTE Saturday, May 5!

Meeting: Wednesday, May 16

Program: (1.) *Issues Facing Texas School Retirees*
(2.) *Volunteer Opportunities at Metrocrest Services*

Webb Chapel Church of Christ
13425 Webb Chapel Rd., Farmers Branch 75234

11:00 meet and greet; **11:30** program/lunch. Lunch \$10.

RSVP by Wed., May 9 to Wanda Patterson by email:
pattersonwow@gmail.com or **text: 214-766-1431.**

Bring donations for Metrocrest Services!



April Program

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

Several of our RSPA members have had a very busy April attending TRTA State Convention and TRTA District 10 Leadership Conference. **Dr. Thalia Matherson** is our outgoing **TRTA District 10 President** and we thank her for her service. She will be one of our speakers for the May 16th meeting. She will be giving us an overview of the main **issues confronting Texas school personnel retirees.**



At our May meeting, we will be **collecting food and household items for Metrocrest Services.** Metrocrest Services depends heavily on volunteers to help deliver to those in need. **Brittni Coe** is **Volunteer Manager** for Metrocrest Services and she will be telling us about **volunteer opportunities available with Metrocrest Services.**

We are having a wonderful response to our **End-of-Year Survey.** If you have not yet responded, please go online and fill it out. (See below.) We do want to know your suggestions and ideas for making our organization even better. Program ideas are welcomed!

End-of-Year Survey

We want your input! Help us to be the best ever by taking our End-of-Year Survey!



To find the survey:

- 1.) Go to our website: localunits.org/cfbrspa/
- 2.) Scroll down and look under the photo
- 3.) Click on "End-of-Year Survey"



News from the Treasurer

Judy Carey, Treasurer

IT'S TIME TO HELP OUR LOCAL C-FB RSPA WIN ONE OF THE \$500.00 AWARDS TO BE HANDED OUT BY TRTA!!!!

Okay, time is running out for us to win \$500.00. We cannot win this award without you helping to make this happen!! It is simple, **all you must do is pay your state and local dues now**. The absolute deadline is June 10, 2018.

If you have your state dues taken out of your annuity or you pay by a bank draft, all you need to pay is your local dues of \$10.00. Your state dues are automatically renewed and counts for this contest.

Make your check out to C-FB RSPA in the amount of \$45.00 for state and local dues and mail to me at **975 Laguna Drive, Coppell, TX 75019**. If you have questions, please email me at judy.carey@verizon.net or call me at 972-393-2956.

If you would like to include a donation to our Children's Book Project, you can include it in your check with your dues. You can write just one check.

Remember if you have any changes in your information, please let me know. If you are retiring soon, if your email address changes, etc., I need to know.

We deeply appreciate your membership and hope you plan to renew NOW for 2018-2019.

Upcoming Field Trips

June 6, 2018 (Wednesday)

Luncheon at Chocolate Angel Café & Tea Room

August 9, 2018 (Thursday)

Dinner at Two Guys from Italy and The Music Man at Firehouse Theatre



Membership

Wanda Patterson, VP for Membership

I'm looking forward to seeing you all at the **May 16th meeting!** Since May is the month that our active school friends might be retiring, please consider contacting them and inviting them to join our group in September. There are also upcoming field trips in June and August that you might invite them to. Please also forward this newsletter to them with a personal note attached explaining our organization.

Please continue to help us win \$500 to use for our **A Book a Child** project by:

- (1.) paying your dues by early June, and
- (2.) encouraging non-members to become members!

The money would REALLY help us with our **A Book a Child** project to give books to the students of C-FBISD. So, invite your non-member friends and past co-workers to attend, and encourage them to JOIN!



Field Trips

Beth Sargent, Linda Frith,
Lee Nitcholas, Sharla Lee

Come join us for a luncheon at the **Chocolate Angel Café and Tea Room** on **Wednesday, June 6th at 11 a.m.** Cost: \$22 (includes lunch, beverage, dessert, and gratuity).

The Chocolate Angel began as a family-owned business, and their exquisite Victorian atmosphere and menu soon made them a Richardson staple.

If you can come, you'll need to pay in advance. Sign up at the May 16th meeting, or send a check made out to CFB RSPA to **Beth Sargent, 1923 Camden Way, Carrollton, 75007**.

We plan to meet at 10 a.m. at the church (Webb Chapel Church of Christ) and carpool. Or, if you'd rather simply meet us at the Chocolate Angel, their address is 635 W. Campbell, Richardson 75080.

As you are planning your summer, remember our special event to visit **The Firehouse Theatre** for the much loved **Music Man** on **Thursday, August 9th**. Cost \$24. Dinner will be in a private room at Two Guys from Italy. Cost \$10. Dinner will be at 5:30; the musical begins at 7:15. If you plan to come, make one check for **\$34** to C-FB RSPA.

For your convenience, you'll be able to sign up for both events in May.

See you there!



School Board Elections

Pat Enlow, Member TRTA District 10
Legislative Committee

Thank you to those of you who went to the polls during Early Voting for **school board members, mayor, and city council members**. **Election Day is Saturday, May 5**, so if you have not voted, **you still have a chance to make your voice heard**. Refer to the RSPA April Newsletter or the email sent out earlier to learn about the candidates. You can go to dallascountyvotes.org or votedenton.com to find sample ballots and polling places.

We aren't finished yet! **Primary Runoff Election Early Voting is May 14-18 with Election Day on Tuesday, May 22**. The only runoff that affects all of us is the runoff between Andrew White and Lupe Valdez for the opponent who will go against Governor Greg Abbott. Information on Andrew White and Lupe Valdez can be found at texansforpubliceducation.com and teachthevote.org.

Reach out to **active school personnel**, family, and friends. If you know people who are not registered, they can still register to vote until October 9 in order to vote in General Election Early Voting October 22- November 2 with Election Day Tuesday, November 6.

NBC Channel 5 has joined CBS Channel 11 in shining a light on active and retiree school personnel issues. Take advantage of this heightened public awareness to let others know that the **most important issues for retired school personnel** are:

- 1) to increase funding to protect TRS Care,
- 2) to retain the Defined **BENEFIT** Plan to protect the Teacher Retirement System,
- 3) to support a pension annuity increase, and
- 4) to repeal the **Windfall Elimination Provision** and **Government Pension Offset** so that we can collect full Social Security benefits to which we may be entitled. Number 4 is a federal issue.

PLEASE VOTE!

Thank you to CUTX for your generous donation to our **A Book a Child** project!



Credit Union of Texas offers a strong tradition of service and quality products including Savings, Money Market, and Checking accounts; Certificates of Deposit; various investment products; and Home Equity, HELOC, and Mortgage loans. They would love the opportunity to be your financial partner and help support you through your retirement. Visit them at www.cutx.org or call 972-263-9497.



Food Drive for Metrocrest Services

Terrie Grimes

IT'S THAT TIME AGAIN!

Our group made donations of money, food, and household items to **Metrocrest Services** in December that really made a difference in the lives of many families in our community. As you can probably guess, the shelves are getting empty again at the Pantry. So at our **May meeting**, we will be having another drive to restock the shelves.

Of course **non-perishable cans** of food dated May 2018 or later are always needed, and there is a dire need for **baking supplies**, like **sugar, flour, cake mixes, bread/cornbread mixes, soup, hygiene supplies**, such as **deodorant, shampoo, lotion**, and **sanitary napkins** (not tampons). The pantry can always use **household items** such as **laundry and dish detergent, cleaning products, and paper towels**, because these items are popular and go fast.



Please buy **average size** containers, **not** jumbo family size.

My crew and I will be in the church parking lot to accept your donations as you come in to the meeting. And yes, **cash donations** are most welcome. In fact, Metrocrest can make their dollars stretch a lot further than we can at our local grocery store because they can buy items at North Texas Food Bank.

We will also accept **check donations**. Please make your checks out to: *Metrocrest Services* and your donation will go toward buying much-needed items at the Pantry.

Tax deduction receipts will be given upon request.

And, if you'd like to join me in **volunteering** at the Pantry, **Friday shifts** are crucially needed at the moment. Let me know if you're interested and I'll help you get in touch with the volunteer coordinator.

If you have questions about your donation, please call me at 972-247-3993.

Thank you!



Take Care

Linda Bambina
Information & Protective Services

At our April TRTA District 10 Leadership Conference, most of the time in my breakout session for Informative & Protective Services was spent talking about personal experiences with credit card and identity theft. Basically, we learned that you should consider getting the metal cases to protect your cards from “software-theft” even while you are walking in a crowd!

Unless you've already gotten your tax refund in hand....please watch out for these scams:

Phishing

Fraudsters send out fake emails asking for you to verify your identity information. The IRS never initiates contact with you in this way.

Phone Fraud

Fraudsters call you impersonating IRS agents. The IRS will mail you, but they never call you.

Tax Preparer Fraud

Emails appear to be from your tax preparer. Delete the email and call your service provider immediately.

Phony IRS agents visit your home

This fraud targets the elderly. Real IRS agents call you prior to any visits. They carry photo IDs.

Source: Norton by Symantec, March 8, 2018

Staying Safe from Falls

Barbara Shell-Fletcher and
Joyce Wagner
Health Care



What is the most common cause of slips trips and falls? Uneven floor surfaces, unsuitable floor coverings, wet floors.

How can seniors prevent falls?

1. Clean up clutter.
2. Repair or remove tripping hazards.
3. Install grab bars and handrails.
4. Avoid wearing loose clothing.
5. Light it right.
6. Wear shoes.
7. Make it nonslip.
8. Live on one level.

How can slips, trips, and falls be prevented?

1. Use moisture-absorbent mats with beveled edges in entrance areas.
2. Display "Wet Floor" signs as needed.
3. Use anti-skid adhesive tape in troublesome areas.
4. Clean up spills immediately.
5. Use proper area rugs or mats for food preparation areas.

What illnesses or conditions increase the risk of falling?

1. Older age.
2. Arthritis.
3. Chronic pain.
4. Diabetes.
5. Parkinson's disease.
6. Anemia or other blood disorders.
7. Thyroid problems.
8. Foot disorders.

NCOA National Council on Aging says one in four older Americans falls every year. Falls are the leading cause of both fatal and nonfatal injuries for people aged 65 and over, resulting in hip fractures, broken bones, and head injuries. Even falls without a major injury can cause an older adult to become fearful or depressed, making it difficult for them to stay active. The good news about falls is that most of them can be prevented.

What are common factors that can lead to a fall?

1. Balance and gait: As we age, most of us lose some coordination, flexibility, and balance—primarily through inactivity—making it easier to fall.
2. Vision: In the aging eye, less light reaches the retina, making contrasting edges, tripping hazards, and obstacles harder to see.
3. Medications: Some prescriptions and over-the-counter medications can cause dizziness, dehydration or interactions with each other that can lead to a fall.
4. Environment: Most seniors have lived in their homes for a long time and have never thought about simple modifications that might keep it safer as they age.

(Continued on page 5)

(Continued from page 4)

5. Chronic health conditions.

How can falls be reduced?

1. Ask your older loved one if they're concerned about falling. Many older adults recognize that falling is a risk, but they believe it won't happen to them or they won't get hurt—even if they've already fallen in the past. If they're concerned about falling, dizziness, or balance, suggest they discuss it with their health care provider who can assess their risk and suggest programs or services that could help.
2. Discuss their current health conditions. Find out if your older loved one is experiencing any problems with managing their own health. Are they having trouble remembering to take their medications or are they experiencing side effects? Is it getting more difficult for them to do things they used to do easily? Also make sure they're taking advantage of all the preventive benefits now offered under Medicare, such as the Annual Wellness visit. Encourage them to speak openly with their health care provider about all of their concerns.
3. Ask about their last eye checkup. If your older loved one wears glasses, make sure they have a current prescription and they're using the glasses as advised by their eye doctor. Remember that using tint-changing lenses can be hazardous when going from bright sun into darkened buildings and homes. A simple strategy is to change glasses upon entry or pause to wait until their lenses adjust. Bifocals also can be problematic on stairs, so it's important to be cautious. For those already struggling with low vision, consult with a low-vision specialist for ways to make the most of their eyesight.
4. Notice if they're holding onto walls, furniture, or someone else when walking or if they appear to have difficulty walking or arising from a chair. A trained physical therapist can help your older loved one improve their



balance, strength, and gait through exercise. They might also suggest a cane or walker—and provide guidance on how to use these aids. Make sure to follow their advice.

5. Talk about their medications. If your older loved one is having a hard time keeping track of medicines or is experiencing side effects, encourage them to discuss their concerns with their doctor and pharmacist. Suggest that they have their medications reviewed each time they get a new prescription. An chart to keep track of medications/schedules and a timed medication dispenser helps adherence to the prescribed medication regime. Also, beware of non-prescription medications that contain sleep aids, including painkillers with “PM” in their names. These can lead to balance issues and dizziness. If your older loved one is having sleeping problems, encourage them to talk to their doctor or pharmacist about safer alternatives.
6. Do a walk-through safety assessment of their home and check:
 1. Lighting: Increase lighting throughout the house, especially at the top and bottom of stairs and in bedroom/bathroom to aid them when getting up in the middle of the night.
 2. Stairs: Two secure rails on all stairs.
 3. Bathrooms: Install grab bars in the tub/shower and near the toilet where your older loved one would actually use them. For even greater safety, consider using a shower chair and hand-held shower.

For more ideas on how to make the home safer, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) offers a home assessment checklist in multiple languages. NCOA, the Administration on Aging, and the CDC also promote a variety of community-based programs, like A Matter of Balance, Stepping On, and Tai Chi, that can help older adults learn how to reduce their risk of falling. Contact your Area Agency on Aging to find out what is available.