



The Heart of NSARTA

NSARTA NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2017



Richard & Brenda Sweet



Paul Cwiklik

PRESIDENT'S CORNER April is the month when everything and everyone becomes renewed again, as the spring flourishes and grows to a panorama of awesome beauty. I wish that all of you will feel that amazing rediscovery of not only that which is around us, but, more importantly, the unsurpassable potential of our own lives.

A recent example in my own life – about 9 years ago, Maureen and I ziplined in Cancun to check off one of our bucket list items. I never thought I'd have the chance, or the courage, to do that again – but I did – over a jungle in the Dominican Republic while on vacation there earlier this month. It was exhilarating flying across the lines atop the trees from station to station and even making my way afoot on a swaying rope bridge. The experience filled me with a bucket load of adrenaline and renewed life!

I hope many of you will be at this month's meeting on April 19. We'll have a recap of what took place at the TRTA Convention in Austin last month, and Carlos Ortiz will have the latest updates on TRS Care and the languishing bills for a possible annuity increase or 13th check. This is a difficult year to squeeze money out of the legislature.

Our rally presence impressed both the House and Senate members, most of whom heaped praise and thanks on us for our service as educators. Adele Murphy and I visited House Speaker Strauss' office as well as that of Senator Donna Campbell, leaving our requests for their support for retired teachers with their staff members.

I'm sure we are all looking forward to the coming of Fiesta and the Spurs successful bid for another championship. **GO, SPURS, GO!**

Let's stop and chat together on the 19th!

NSARTA HEARTS FOR APRIL Michelle Bibb

Our “**F I E S T A**” HEARTS OF NSARTA are Brenda and Richard Sweet. The Sweets have been members of TRTA for many years and this past year they joined NSARTA.

Richard Sweet was born in Corpus Christi, Texas. His father worked for the railroad and they moved to San Antonio when Richard was almost 3 years old. He attended SAISD schools and graduated from Brackenridge High School....along with another famous NSARTA member, Barbara Yates. He attended Del Mar Junior College in Corpus and graduated from Texas A & I (now Texas A&M Kingsville) with a BBA in Business Administration. His early jobs included working for SIC Finance Company, Luby’s Cafeteria as a trainee manager, and then with food service companies SAGA and Kraft Foods.

Richard’s hobbies include working in his gorgeous yard...he said he used to play golf and just might start playing again. Brenda’s hobbies are her grandkids and reading. Their favorite place to have dinner is Los Barrios, at it’s original location on Blanco Road.

Brenda Sweet Brenda was born in Spur, Texas also known as the “Hometown of Red McCombs”. Spur is in the Panhandle near Lubbock. They moved to Lovington, New Mexico, her dad’s hometown, when she was a young child. After a few years, her family moved to Ralls, Texas to help her grandfather on his ranch. Her dad eventually bought a farm in Kress, Texas where she graduated from Kress High School, home of the Kress Kangaroos. Brenda graduated from West Texas State Univeristy (now West Texas A&M University) in Canyon, Texas with a BA in Elementary Education. She said she went to “year round college” never missing a semester of school or summer classes. She graduated in a little over 3 years.

Brenda taught many grade levels. When teaching in Odessa, she became certified in Special Education. While living in Levelland, she attended classes from Texas Tech University and received her Masters of Education as an Elementary Diagnostication. She worked for a Special Education Co-Op, made up of 11 small school districts, her last 6 years as a Diagnostication before retiring (the FIRST time). After retiring with 30 years in TRS and an additional 2 years in a private school, she began doing Contract Work for Judson ISD and Pleasanton ISD, finally retiring in 2008. OR so she thought....in 2009 she worked one last year of Contract Work for NEISD at Garner Middle School as a Diagnostacion and has NOW FINALLY RETIRED after working an additional 10 years doing Contract Work.

Brenda and Richard met when she was in college at West Texas State. She worked in the cafeteria and Richard was the Food Service Manager for the University. They dated for less than a year before marrying in May, 1966. This year they will celebrate their 51st anniversary!! They have lived in Edinburg, Odessa, Texas, Natchitoches, La., Kingsville, and Levelland, Texas. In each of these locations, Richard was the Food Service Manager for a local school district or college. He retired from Levelland ISD as Assistant Superientendant of Food Services/Business Manager. The Sweets have 2 daughters, Melanie and Alison, and 5 grandchildren ranging in age from 8 years to almost 1 year old. Each summer

(NSARTA HEARTS CONTINUED)

Brenda and Richard have “Deeda Camp” for their grandkids. The grandkids call Brenda “Deeda” and Richard “PopPop”. One week Melanie’s girls come to DeeDa Camp in San Antonio and the following week Alison’s boys come to Camp DeeDa. During these weeks, Deeda and PopPop show the grandkids all the “wonders of San Antonio”. Brenda and Richard both agree this time with the kids is very special, wonderful, and maybe just a little tiresome!

Thank you, Brenda and Richard for being supportive members of TRTA and NSARTA. We are delighted you retired in San Antonio and have become an active couple in our organization

LEGISLATIVE/FOUNDATION *Carlos Ortiz*



The 85th Legislative Session is entering the final 2 months and some bills will become law while some will not. Of the over 4 thousand many will die in committee. The 2 most important bills prepare the State’s budget for the next 2 years. They are HB 1 and SB 1. The House version has more money and it taps into the Rainy Day Fund. The Rainy Day Fund has over 10 billion dollars. Most likely the Conference Committee composed of members from both chambers will resolve the differences in the finances for the next 2 years.

Please go to www.capitol.state.tx.state and follow the Bills on your computer.



*Fiesta is here and
We all love a parade!*

PROGRAM Peggy Peterson/2nd Vice President, 210.373.3961 or rpete4321@satx.rr.com



VIVA FIESTA! VIVA BOOKS! VIVA NSARTA BIG READ!

It's time to circle up to discuss our very first Big Read selection, *News of the World*! Last October we met author Paulette Jiles at The Twig bookstore when she read selections from her new novel. Set in Texas shortly after the Civil War, we were quickly swept up in the saga of Captain Jefferson Kyle Kidd and his efforts to reunite a young woman with her family. With many avenues to explore, join retired educator, Marta Ameziquita, as she sparks our thoughts and curiosities. **IT IS NOT NECESSARY for you to have read the book.** We all have ideas and opinions to share in small conversation circles! *And you might make a new friend as well!*

NSARTA also welcomes Don Vinez, Business Development Officer for Firstmark Credit Union, as he brings information from another of our yearbook sponsors.

Mark your calendar for May 17th. As always, we will come together for a fabulous pot luck luncheon organized by the wonderful Hospitality Committee!

In addition, guest speaker, Kim Folse will challenge us to "Take Your Passion to Limit." She asks, "What are you really good at? Chances are, there's a future in it! Come hear how a passion turned into a reality."

Don't miss a second of the *fun!*

TREASURER'S REPORT Carolyn Pfeiffer 210-372-0434 carolynpfeiffer48@gmail.com



As of April 7, 2017, in our NSARTA checking account

we have a balance of **\$1908.44.**

More details to come at our next meeting on Wednesday, April 19th.

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY Barbara Yates 494-6444



A get-well card was sent to Betty Moseley, who had a severe case of the flu. A sympathy card was sent to the family of Jack Jordan. Even though he was not a member of NSARTA, we know that many of you worked with him.

MEMBERSHIP Harold Black



March marks the official start of our membership drive. Please talk to your friends and those who will be retiring and encourage them to join us. I've already sent in 21 renewals on our first update for 2017-2018, but we've got a long way to go.

I also want to encourage each of you to log on to the NSARTA website. It is so easy. All you do is:

Open your internet browser and type in <http://www.localunits.org/NSARTA>. The http:// is not even needed. the computer will add that for you. ALL the forms you might need to renew are on our web page under Forms. "The TRS 593 and TRTA membership renewal require being printed in portrait format. NSARTA local forms need to be printed in landscape format." They will also be available on the table where we sign in at our March meeting.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

NOTIFICATION COMMITTEE Michele Bibb 494-8197



Your friendly NSARTA callers are hard at work calling all members (who don't have internet service) reminding them of our meetings, speakers, and other important NSARTA information.

Have you contacted any of your retired teacher friends to invite them to our meetings? We are beginning our 2017-2018 membership drive and we need your help to increase our membership. You might know of someone retiring this May. Call them and share information about us. We'd love to add them to our membership and to our calling list.

Have you checked out our FACEBOOK page? Go to Facebook and search NSARTA. It is a wonderful source of information for those who have the internet.

REGISTRATION Pat Loewe, Eddy English



The registration desk keeps a record of each person who attends. They also distribute name tags and furnish every attendee with a raffle ticket for a drawing at the end of meetings. Be sure to stop by the registration desk and sign in, as you enter each meeting.



Is here at last!

HOSPITALITY

Michele Bibb, Barbara Rothe 380-8150, Linda Nolder 490-1035



Big “thank you” to Sherlyn Valentin, Sue Blom, Cindy Nobles, Michele Bibb, Verna Reagan, and Barb Rothe for the delicious March refreshments. I DO believe NSARTA has some really good bakers in our membership.

Everyone will be asked to bring an item for our annual “Brown Bag” luncheon in May. There will be sheet/poster with different categories for members to sign up. “Thank you” in advance for making this luncheon delicious for everyone. If you are unable to be at the April meeting and want to bring something for our May luncheon, please call either Barbara Rothe at 380-8150 or Linda Nolder at 219-4749 so we can add your name to our list.

CHILDRENS' BOOK PROJECT

Nancy Dooley, Pat Loewe, Carolyn Varian



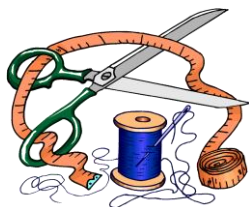
A very special thank you to everyone who has donated books and/or money, to NSARTA's 2017 Children's Book Project. On Thursday, May 25th, we will begin our 2017 distribution by donating over 600 books to each child at Passmore Elementary School in Northside ISD. The distribution will begin at 8:00 am and will be completed around noon; the school is located at 570 Pinn Road, 78227 (397-0500). Hopefully, you will be able to join us for some or all of the distribution time to see the excitement of the children as they choose a book of their very own. The librarian plans to write an article for the school and NISD websites, and Eddy English will take pictures to put on our web page.

Please take the opportunity to participate in this project and bring your book (new or very gently used) and/or money donation to the, meeting on April 19th. Over 450 books have been collected thanks to the shopping skills and extra donations from many of our members. However, we still need your support to complete our collection of these books.

Baskets for donations will be at each table and at the Registrar's table. Each book donated will have a bookplate identifying it as a gift from TRTA and NSARTA. For more information, please call or talk with us at the monthly meeting. Thank you in advance for your generous support of this project.

STITCHERY

Ledru Barker



Stitchery group has been busy making and delivering pillows, bags, afghans, and quilts to the VA hospital. If you would like to join us, we meet once a month to stuff the pillows. If you can't make it but would like to crochet or knit afghans, contact Ledru Barker for free yarn. Her number is 210-289-3554. Leave a message or you won't get a call back.

VOLUNTEERING

Sue Winebrenner, 8615 Espanola Dr. Helotes, Tx. 78023



Be sure to fill in your volunteer sheet with hours volunteered in the past few months. The notebook is always at the registration desk. It is so much easier to tally your hours each month than to try to account for them after the year has passed.

Article from Billie Oehler

Phony Debt Collectors Claim to File "Civil Complaint"

Some scams just don't quit! Debt collection cons are one of the most prevalent scams, often there's a new twist. This time, scammers are scaring victims into paying by claiming to have filed a "civil complaint" against them.

How the Scam Works:

You receive a call from someone claiming to be collecting money for an overdue payment. This "collection agent" informs you that a civil complaint was filed against you. Con artists do a great job of making this seem real. The scammer may provide specific details, such as the amount of the debt, the complaint case number and a phone number where you can follow up. As convincing as the information seems, it's all phony.

If you call the number, another "agent" will claim that the company tried to contact you about the debt. Now, to avoid a pending lawsuit, you need to pay immediately. To do so, you need to make a wire transfer or load a prepaid debit card with the funds immediately.

Don't do it! No matter how intimidating the threats seem, these phony collection agents don't have any legal power. In most cases, the debt doesn't even exist.

Protect Yourself from Debt Collector Cons:

To keep yourself protected against debt collector scams know your rights.

- **Just hang up:** If you don't have any outstanding loans, hang up. Don't press any numbers or speak to an "agent."
- **Ask the debt collector to provide official "validation notice" of the debt.** In the U.S., and most of Canada, debt collectors are required by law to provide the information in writing. The notice must include the amount of the debt, the name of the creditor and a statement of your rights. If the self-proclaimed collector won't provide the information, hang up.
- **Ask the caller for his/her name, company, street address, and telephone number.** Then, confirm that the collection agency is real.
- **Do not provide or confirm bank account, credit card or other personal information** over the phone until you have verified the call.
- **Check your credit report.** In the U.S., check with one of the three national credit reporting companies ([Equifax](#), [TransUnion](#), [Experian](#)). In Canada, check with [Equifax Canada](#). This will help you determine if you have outstanding debts or if there has been suspicious activity.
- **Place a fraud alert on your credit report.** If the scammer has personal information, place a fraud alert with the three national credit reporting companies.

For more information

Check out this [article](#) from the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) about dealing with fake debt collectors. See other Scam Alert coverage of debt collection scams, [here](#).

To report a scam, go to [BBB Scam Tracker](#).

HEALTH *Eddy English*



Founded and sponsored by NCADD, **Alcohol Awareness Month** was established in 1987 to help reduce the stigma so often associated with alcoholism by encouraging communities to reach out to the American public each April with information about alcohol, alcoholism and recovery. Alcoholism is a chronic, progressive disease, genetically predisposed and fatal if untreated. However people can and do recover. In fact, it is estimated that as many as 20 million

individuals and family members are living lives in recovery!

Alcohol Awareness Month provides a focused opportunity across America to increase awareness and understanding of alcoholism, its causes, effective treatment and recovery. It is an opportunity to decrease stigma and misunderstandings in order to dismantle the barriers to treatment and recovery, and thus, make seeking help more readily available to those who suffer from this disease.

Each April, NCADD's National Network of Affiliates and other supporting organizations across the country will use this opportunity to address the Nation's #1 public health problem through a broad range of media strategies, awareness campaigns, programs and events in their local communities.

An integral part of NCADD Alcohol Awareness Month is Alcohol-Free Weekend, which takes place on the first weekend of April to raise public awareness about the use of alcohol and how it may be affecting individuals, families, businesses and our communities. During Alcohol-Free Weekend, NCADD extends an open invitation to all Americans to engage in three alcohol-free days. Those individuals or families who experience difficulty or discomfort in this 72-hour experiment are urged to contact local NCADD affiliates, Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) and Al-Anon to learn more about alcoholism and its early symptoms.

It is important to recognize the signs and symptoms of alcohol and drug abuse early. If you're worried about your own drug or alcohol use, or that of a friend or family member, here are some of the warning signs to look for:

- Temporary blackouts or memory loss.
- Recurrent arguments or fights with family members or friends as well as irritability, depression, or mood swings.
- Continuing use of alcohol to relax, to cheer up, to sleep, to deal with problems, or to feel "normal."
- Headache, anxiety, insomnia, nausea, or other unpleasant symptoms when one stops drinking.
- Flushed skin and broken capillaries on the face; a husky voice; trembling hands; bloody or black/tarry stools or vomiting blood; chronic diarrhea.
- Drinking alone, in the mornings, or in secret



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