



## The Heart of NSARTA

# NSARTA NEWSLETTER

# MARCH, 2017



*Elise Townsend*



*Paul Cwiklik*



*Joe Harber*

### ***PRESIDENT'S CORNER***

When I was a boy, we learned that March was the month that roared in like a lion! It would seem that was the way February made its exit last month, leaving parts of San Antonio reeling from 4-5 tornadoes! Fortunately, no lives were lost. So far, this month we've had a bit of rain and temps that go up and down from day to day. If you were asleep when it happened, by the time you receive this month's newsletter we will have turned our clocks ahead and lost one golden hour of much needed sleep.

Looking ahead – the **Ides of March** will be set us on the 15<sup>th</sup>; all you English teachers “beware. Also on the 15<sup>th</sup>, we'll have our monthly meeting featuring a Health and Fitness Adventure with our good friend Chickie, from Independence Hill, and some of the resort community members. Also with us – Jake Yetterberg will be on hand to give us the latest information about what's going on in the financial world.

Keep a keen eye open as the leprechauns will be out in force on the 17<sup>th</sup>, so buy your corned beef brisket early with plenty of Irish potatoes and cabbage. Don't miss the Murphy's St. Patrick's Day River Parade along a two-and-a-half mile stretch of the San Antonio River **dyed with a bright shamrock color** to remind us of the River Shannon. My wife is Irish, so I must remember to wear something green that day, or I'll get my bottom pinched!

Signs of spring are here now: Oak pollen on the down side, but our perennial Texas Bluebonnets are on the bright side already. Be sure to slip down to Natalia March 23-25 for their 49<sup>th</sup> Annual Bluebonnet Festival. Festivities include the carnival, midway, Saturday parade, music, dancing, food, drink, and craft booths. This is their annual fundraiser for the Natalia Veteran's Memorial Library. All proceeds benefit the library.

Even if you're not planning on attending the TRTA Convention in Austin March 27-28, please try to join us at the Capital for Rally Day on the 29<sup>th</sup>. Be sure to wear a red shirt to identify yourself as a retired teacher, visit with your legislator, and enjoy some ice cream in the afternoon. Checkout the NSARTA Facebook page, and this newsletter for details.





We have the “luck of the Irish” with us this month as we spotlight [Elise Townsend](#) and [Joe Harber](#) as our Hearts of NSARTA. These 2 members were both born and raised in Texas, graduated from Texas high schools and universities, and have no plans to leave our great state. AND, I learned they were both recruited by Mary Beth Gerza to join NSARTA!!

[Elise Townsend](#) was born in San Antonio, Texas. We all know Elise as a very positive person, well, so were her parents. She said they married the night of the stock market crash in 1929. Her dad took what very little money they had and began a hardware store in town, later expanding to 3 hardware stores. Elise is a graduate of Thomas Jefferson High School. She attended San Antonio College for a year then transferred to University of Texas in Austin. Her first teaching experience was 3<sup>rd</sup> grade at Will Rogers Elementary in SAISD. She was awarded a scholarship to Trinity University obtaining her Masters Degree in Counseling and Supervision. She remembers one of her classrooms had 37 students, was on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, had 7 windows with NO screens and NO air conditioning. While at Trinity, she met Dr. Billy Reagan, Superintendent of NEISD. He was so impressed with Elise, he brought her a job application, she completed it, and the next year she began working at the NEISD Pupil Appraisal Center. While working there, she attended Incarnate Word University to obtain her diagnostician certification. She said her specialty was working with Early Childhood kids. She retired in 1991 with 29 years as an educator.

Elise has 3 grown children. Her son is a retired micropalontologist, a daughter who is a retired teacher from Alamo Heights Middle School (but continues to sub there), and a daughter living in Denver who sells textbooks (and is getting married this summer). She has 8 grandkids and 6 great grandkids. She is extremely proud of her family, their accomplishments, and especially of their close ties to each other. She said they talk, text, or email each other every day.

Elise has SO many hobbies. She LOVES making ceramics and even has her own kiln at home. She paints china, quilts, sews with several groups, including the NSARTA Stitchery Group, volunteers at Nix Hospital, Lion’s Field and the McNay, is a Conservation Society Member, a life member of the Women’s Club, TRTA and NSARTA. She is a Past President and Past Lady Chairman of the State Association of Texas Pioneers. This organization was founded in 1918 and at one time almost dissolved. But thanks to Elise, it continues to thrive year after year. During Fiesta time, The State Association of Texas Pioneers holds the first ball of the fiesta season – The Pioneer Ball. In 1953 her father was Potentate of the San Antonio Shriners. Ladies that are related to Masons are invited to join the Daughter of the Nile organization. This week, Elise will receive her 50 year pin as a member of this organization. As a Past President of Daughters of the Nile, she, her mom and grandmother have all ridden on the Shriners’ floats during the Fiesta parades.

Elise wants us to know that she loves going and doing lots of things. She loves people, kids, staying active (NO boob tube watching for her) and continues learning new things by attending ALIR. ALIR, Academy for Learning in Retirement, is a NEISD sponsored program that has 400-500 retirees enrolled in over 50 classes. Retirees can select what areas they’d like to explore. Classes are held Monday-Thursday from 9:30-2:30. She wants to encourage everyone to check out this program and to always continue learning!

[Joe Harber](#) was born in Creedmoor, Texas which is located in the southern part of Travis County. Joe said he believes Creedmoor’s population is now around 150 people. His dad was a farmer and during the time of the Depression, there wasn’t much work or money in Creedmoor. His family moved to San Antonio where his dad worked as an airplane mechanic at Kelly and Randolph AFB. Joe graduated from South San Antonio High School when he was only 16 years old. He went to San Antonio Junior College when it was located at Presa and S. Alamo St. After 2 years, he transferred to Southwest Texas State Teachers College and majored in biology and chemistry. He was only 20 when he graduated from SWT. Upon graduation, he joined the Army as a medic and was stationed at Ft. Sam Houston. He worked in the Burn Center Research Lab where he experimented on burned animals, developing techniques to help skin heal more quickly. These techniques could then be applied to soldiers that had suffered burns during the war.

Joe Harber continued

He said that some of these procedures are still used today for people suffering from severe burns. Upon leaving the Army, he returned to SWT and obtained his masters degree in chemistry and biology. He has also attended UT in Austin for additional graduate work.

Joe said the only school he has ever taught at was San Antonio College. He REALLY wanted to teach biology but there were no openings in that department. He taught chemistry for 2 years and finally a job in the biology department became available. Later he was the biology department chairman for 17 years. Joe was in the education field for 36 years.

He met his wife while they were both students at San Antonio Jr. College. In fact, they met in the “wreck” room, not “rec” room. He said the room was in such bad repair, it was lovingly called the “wreck” room. They also attended the same church. She sings in the choir, was a Sunday School teacher, and attended many NSARTA Christmas luncheons. They married in 1958 on August 8<sup>th</sup>, at 8PM. Joking he said that on August 8<sup>th</sup>, 2008 at 8PM they celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary.....that’s 8/8/08 at 8PM. Guess “8” is their lucky number. They have now been married 58 years!! They have a daughter who is a CPA in North Carolina and a daughter who is a USAA computer programmer. Sadly, their son passed away in 2003. Joe has 5 grandkids with one doing his student teaching this semester in biology at Madison High School. Joe is extremely proud of all his family and he loves his faithful spoiled dog, Blue Bell.

Joe LOVES photography but doesn’t get to do it as much as he’d like to. He said he has hundreds of pictures he’s taken saved on his computer. He also does wood carving specializing in ducks. He will research what the ducks look like, carve and paint them. He and his wife belong to Sunset Ridge Church of Christ. Did you know that church sits on the site where Woodmen of the World once had a TB hospital? As the number of TB cases declined, there was no need for the hospital. It was torn down EXCEPT for the chapel which is now Sunset Ridge Church of Christ. Joe said several of the stained glass windows in the church were made by Tiffany. He especially enjoys looking at the “River of Life” window during church services.

Joe said he’s never held an office in NSARTA (although he’s been asked, but politely declined) but for several years he would sell pecans to NSARTA members to raise money for our scholarship. He proudly told me that by selling pecans, enough money was raised to give two \$500 scholarships each year. Now, that’s a great and delicious idea.

He wants everyone to know that he has already paid his NSARTA dues for next year...have you??

LEGISLATIVE/FOUNDATION *Carlos Ortiz*



While the 85<sup>th</sup> Legislature is in session, please write simple note(s) about your concern(s). For example, I wrote Representative Dan Huberty, Education Committee Chairperson, and thanked him for how his committee was against vouchers for private schools. These notes may be one or two sentences. Now if you have a strong point of view on an issue with supporting materials, then by all means write your letter. March 10 was the last day to file a bill in either House. The real work/discussion begins behind closed doors. Please express your view on the Legislative Bills---NOW.



PROGRAM Peggy Peterson/2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President, 210.373.3961 or [rpete4321@satx.rr.com](mailto:rpete4321@satx.rr.com)



READY TO GET YOUR GROOVE ON?

KICK OFF THE WINTER BLUES AND WELCOME SPRING THIS MONTH WITH NSARTA!

Our March focus is health and wellness and NSARTA welcomes back Chickie Backhaus, Community Relations Coordinator at Independence Hill, along with an IH Fitness Trainer and a few special IH residents. These folks will share ideas to help us focus on a healthy lifestyle and take us through a few ways to get our ‘groove on’ with Chair Yoga and no telling what else! Great thanks to Chickie for putting this program together for us. Independence Hill is one of our longtime yearbook sponsors.

Speaking of yearbook sponsors, we will again be briefed on what’s happening in the world of finance by another of our partners, Jake Yetterberg of Yetterberg Retirement Solutions. Jake is an interesting, knowledgeable presenter and his thoughts are not to be missed.

So, come ready to move and groove as we welcome spring and nourish our brains and bodies!

TREASURER’S REPORT Carolyn Pfeiffer 210-372-0434 [carolynpfeiffer48@gmail.com](mailto:carolynpfeiffer48@gmail.com)

Treasurer’s Report as of: 3-6-2017



\$1,686.11



Carolyn Pfeiffer

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY Barbara Yates 494-6444



A get-well card was sent to Rae Beth Barton who had surgery, but, we are sad to report that she passed away on February 24. A sympathy card was sent to her family. We also lost Ann McBain, who passed away in February, and a sympathy card was sent to her family. Our prayers are with these families.

A get well-card was sent to Sarah Villarreal, who was sick.

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. They will also be available on the table where we sign in at our March meeting.

*Sad News*

Rae Beth was one of our NSARTA Hearts in the September '16 Newsletter. She was an incredible person and I'm so glad we got to spotlight her many accomplishments.

## Rae Beth Barton

1933 - 2017 Obituary



November 20, 1933 -February 26, 2017

Rae Beth Barton (November 20, 1933 - February 26, 2017) died in San Antonio following heart surgery. She was a life-long educator, dedicated follower of Jesus Christ and beloved sister, mother and grandmother. Born in Nacogdoches, Texas to Rayburn and Elizabeth Parrott, she attended Stephen F. Austin University, ('53), and taught at home and abroad in Japan for 3 years as a Methodist missionary. As an educator in San Antonio's Northside Independent School District from 1979 to retirement in 1999, she taught in numerous elementary schools and was principal of Boone Elementary School. Her commitment to education is also seen in her 46 years as a member of P.E.O. promoting education for women. She is predeceased by her husband of 44 years Rev. Edwin Barton. Rae Beth is deeply missed by her sister Sue (Finley) Vaughn; children Paul (Kim), Priscilla, Katherine and Mary Barton; grandchildren Jessica and Paloma (Matt) Wu, Jian Ketunen, and Samuel, Nathan, Josiah and Isaac Barton; great-grandchildren Claire, Jack, Colin and Luke Loveless and Ila Wu-Kutcher. A Graveside will be held at Mission Burial Park North 11 am Monday, March 6, 2017 followed by a memorial service at Wayside Chapel, 1705 NW Loop 410 at 1 pm.

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.

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



Thank you to Carolyn Pfeiffer, Sue Winebrenner, Bertha Colunga, Adele Murphy, Mary Ramos, and Terrie De La Garza for providing refreshments at our February meeting.

If you have not provided refreshments for any meeting this year, April is your month to bring them.

The sign-up sheet is in the front hallway. You will receive a phone call the week before the meeting to remind you of what item you wanted to bring.

MANY thanks to those of you that have already provided refreshments this year!! AND many members, you know who you are, have provided refreshments for several meetings. Thank you for your generosity!.



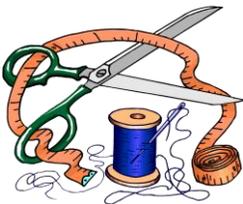
CHILDRENS' BOOK DRIVE Nancy Dooley, Pat Loewe, Carolyn Varian



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 on the NISD website, 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 March 15th. 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. Hopefully, you will consider helping to collect, store, and/or organize age-appropriate books for the children. 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.

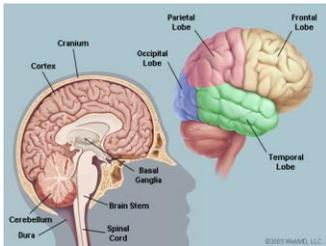
VOLUNTEERING Sue Winebrenner, 8615 Espanola Dr. Helotes, Tx. 78023



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.



March 13-19, 2017



## Brain Awareness Week (BAW) is the global campaign to increase public awareness of the progress and benefits of brain research.

Every March, BAW unites the efforts of partner organizations worldwide in a celebration of the brain for people of all ages. Activities are limited only by the organizers' imaginations and include open days at neuroscience labs; exhibitions about the brain; lectures on brain-related topics; social media campaigns; displays at libraries and community centers; classroom workshops; and more.

### Answering Your Questions About Brain Research

**WHAT ARE NEURODEGENERATIVE DISEASES?** Neurodegenerative diseases start killing neurons long before symptoms appear. Their visible effects progress slowly. Researchers seek biomarkers, such as compounds in blood or the fluid surrounding the spinal cord, that will reveal disease activity earlier and more efficiently show whether experimental drugs work. Extensive research campaigns such as the Alzheimer's Disease Neuroimaging Initiative (a public-private partnership) and the NIH-funded Parkinson's Disease Biomarker Program are spearheading these efforts.

In neurodegenerative diseases, neurons deteriorate, malfunction and die. The most common are Alzheimer's disease and Parkinson's disease, which afflict 5 million and 1 million Americans, respectively, according to the Harvard NeuroDiscovery Center, a research group that focuses on these disorders. Other neurodegenerative diseases include multiple sclerosis (400,000), Huntington's disease and ALS (30,000 each). The occurrence of Alzheimer's and Parkinson's increases with age, although "early onset" variants occur as well. The diseases start in different parts of the brain and cause different symptoms: Alzheimer's first hits the hippocampus and cortex and impairs memory and thinking; loss of dopamine-producing neurons in the basal ganglia makes movement problems predominate in Parkinson's. Symptoms worsen and broaden as neurons die throughout the brain.

Finding treatments to halt or reverse neurodegenerative diseases is the ultimate goal of much brain research. But before we can treat these diseases, we first need to understand them. Most neurodegenerative diseases involve malformed or overproduced proteins that clump in the neuron: beta-amyloid in Alzheimer's, alpha-synuclein in Parkinson's and huntingtin in Huntington's. They are believed to play a role (as yet unclear) in cell malfunction and death. Recent discoveries have highlighted another protein, tau, as a culprit common to neurodegenerative diseases (and TBI). Tau is essential for basic processes within the cell, so abnormalities can have profound consequences. In their efforts to understand neurodegenerative diseases, researchers have broadened their investigations to include glia, the "other brain cells" that support and regulate neurons. They're looking beyond the brain, too, at body processes such as glucose metabolism, which appears to link Alzheimer's and diabetes. How exactly are these diseases related to aging? Why do some people live long lives and never develop them? Identifying "protective" genes or lifestyle factors may provide insights into prevention and cure.



MARCH 2017

