PRESIDENT’S CORNER

Well, we have arrived – the final segment of our 2017-2018 program series. We have had a full plate served each month: from Tim Lee’s always rousing pep talk about our TRS pension and, especially this year, TRS CARE, to the several dialogues with our local legislators, election of officers, visits from our valued directory sponsors, energizing volunteerism in support of TRTA’s 65th Annual Convention, and the launch of our 2018-2019 membership renewal and recruitment campaign.

As we roll up to May 16 for our final gathering, we will celebrate NSARTA’s 43rd anniversary with our magnificent potluck luncheon, replete with salads, sandwiches, and a multitude of side dishes. Before we part for the summer months, we will pause in remembrance of Memorial Day.

While most of us will be enjoying the summer months, the NSARTA leadership team will also be tying up this year’s loose ends with an audit of the unit’s financial accounts and a persistent effort to achieve a better outcome with our 2018-2019 membership renewal and recruitment campaign.

Unit leaders will continue over the summer months to broaden their knowledge of TRTA goals and how to attain them with the help of members like you. As a team, we will attend the District 20 Leadership Development Conference in Floresville on June 7. The Executive Committee will meet in July to strategize plans for the 2018-2019 program year prior to the August meeting of the extended governing board, a full group of nearly 20 dedicated officers, committee chairs, and activity coordinators. It is our hope that by then we will have achieved a better outcome with our 2018-2019 membership renewal and recruitment campaign.
As you scan back up the page, I have tried to make it crystal clear how we, as a total unit that includes you and me both, have not been doing a good job of membership renewal and recruitment. The mind-set that some people have about waiting until September or October to renew membership puts TRTA/NSARTA at a distinct disadvantage in GETTING THE JOB DONE. While it is true, that TRTA continues to represent the interests of ALL retired public educators, whether they are members or not, does not negate the reality that it takes financial backing from a committed membership (now more than 88,000 retirees) to work with TRS, TRS-CARE, and most importantly the Texas Governor, Lt Governor, and the Texas House and Senate.

You will find the following clip from Harold Black’s segment later in the newsletter:

“We are trying to win $500.00 by having the highest % of membership increase by our May filing for a unit with 200 and 300 members. We now as of 5.2.18 have 138 renewals or new memberships for 2018-2019, but that is not ½ of our last year’s memberships. Please renew today!!!!

While the money may be one issue, the greater issue, for some retirees, is an apparent misconception that the future of our pension, an elusive COLA, and increasing TRS-CARE premiums are somebody else’s responsibility to solve. NO, my dear colleagues, IT IS OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO PARTICIPATE IN BEING PART OF THE SOLUTION. WHEN WE DON’T GET INVOLVED, THEN WE ARE PART OF THE PROBLEM! Respectfully, if you have not renewed your membership yet, please do so TODAY, AND PLEASE PASS THE WORD to other retirees you know to get involved, too!

NSARTA HEARTS FOR MAY  by Michelle Bibb

Our “Hearts” this month have both served as NSARTA 2nd Vice President, served on the Notification Committee, have husbands who have served during the Viet Nam War, and both enjoy going to Jim’s for breakfast, served at any time of the day. Our May Hearts are Janet James & Michele Bibb. These 2 ladies “serve” on many committees, work in their communities, and are very involved with family.

Nana Janet LeLaurin James was born right here in San Antonio at the downtown P&S Hospital, now part of the Baptist Hospital System. She proudly stated she was born in 1935 and is one of the oldest members of NSARTA. Her father graduated from Brackenridge High School while her mother attended Main Avenue High School before transferring to Thomas Jefferson. Her mom, Evelyn Hays, was a member of one of the first classes to graduate from TJHS. After high school, Janet’s mother worked at Westinghouse in San Antonio. Evelyn’s brother, a student at A&M, arranged a blind date with a handsome young cadet also attending A&M. Louis LeLaurin, Jr. later proposed and the young married couple moved to San Antonio living in the King William area on Guenther Street. He began St. Mary’s Law School and worked with Dun and Bradstreet during a time when people were struggling through the Depression. Since WWII was going on, Louis joined the U. S. Army and served in the Reserve forces as a Captain in the Intelligence Corps, which fit with his law studies. With Dun and Bradstreet, the family moved to Shreveport, LA where Janet began school. She resisted going to school with crying fits, a true case of Separation Anxiety Disorder that embarrassed her mother greatly. Janet’s sister, Mary Louise, was born in 1945. When Janet was 12 years old, the family moved back to San Antonio where she attended Horace Mann Middle School. She graduated from Thomas Jefferson High School in 1953. She was in the Cadet Corp, a Jr. ROTC for girls, and was a member of the Rifle Team. Her brother, Louis LeLaurin, III, was born in 1954. This was the year Janet’s father set up a law practice in San Antonio. Currently, her brother Louis is an attorney in town and her sister Mary Louise, a widow of a doctor of internal medicine, lives in Kerrville and is the mother of 6 children.
As a freshman at the University of Texas in Austin she joined a sorority. To this day, Janet is an active member of Alpha Delta Pi Sorority. She met her first husband, Jack E. Scott, Jr. through a sorority sister and they married in 1955. Lt. Jack Scott was a navigator with the U. S. Air Force during the Korean War. He left the military to finish his B.S. Degree at Stephen F. Austin College. Janet also attended SFA hoping to obtain her teaching degree. But, she became a mother instead and had to leave school. First, they had Jack E. Scoot, III and two years later LeLaurin Scott was born. Jack was a Petty Officer with the U. S. Navy before illness took his life in 2016. Her daughter, LeLaurin Schiller, is the Executive Administrative Assistant to Donna Newman, Assistant Superintendent of Instruction and Campus Administration at NEISD. Janet and Jack divorced after 12 years of marriage.

Janet said her parents were wonderful to let her and the children move back in with them. She graduated from Trinity University with a BA in Education. She “paid back” her tuition from Trinity by working for SAISD helping develop a Special Education Program at Hawthorn Middle School. There she worked with learning disabled children at the middle school level for 4 years. She later transferred to Alamo Heights Jr. High teaching Special Education. During the summer, she taught high school English in order to earn money to purchase a much needed refrigerator. One of her friends from Trinity Baptist Church decided Janet needed to “spice up her life” a little bit. She convinced Janet to go with her to the Farmer’s Daughter Bar and Dance Hall one weekend. There she met Herman James, a widow with 2 girls in college. They dated for a year and married in 1976. He was soon assigned to Fort Ord, California as Deputy Installation Commander. She said they had a lovely home near Carmel, California and entertained almost every weekend. Two years later they moved back to San Antonio where Colonel James retired with 32 years of military service. Janet went back to Trinity University and earned a masters degree in Psychology. She was a Specialist in School Psychology at NEISD for 16 years. Janet retired in 2000 with 28 total years in education. Herman and Janet have 9 grandchildren and the “greats” are coming every year.

She and Col. James are deacons at Trinity Baptist and stay active in many church activities. She is a member of the San Antonio Women’s Club, is active in the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) and Daughters of the Republic of Texas (DRT). In 1991, Janet was chairman of the Fiesta Ball with the State Association of Texas Pioneers. They enjoy Saturday brunch at the Petroleum Club but are staying closer to home as Colonel James is 91 years old and it’s getting more difficult for him to travel. Janet remains an active member of NSARTA having served as President, 2nd Vice President, and member of the Notification Committee. Janet, your warm sweet smile and positive attitude fills us all with happiness. Thank you for all you have done and continue to do to help NSARTA grow.

Michele Bibb  I’m finding it difficult to write about myself, so please bear with me. I was born in Austin, Texas. My dad was a highway engineer who built highways all over Texas. My mom was a homemaker who had a difficult job of taking care of 3 kids while my dad travelled all week. It was dad’s experience working at H. B. Zachary Construction that led him to join the Seabees in WWII. This group of men built naval bases in “theatres of war” mainly on Japanese held islands. When he returned to Texas, he began working at Perry Construction Company, a company he would later purchase. Until the time my brother began elementary school, my family moved to whatever small town where Dad was building a road. I’ve lived in Waller, Cut’N Shoot, Conroe, Bastrop, Richmond, Rosenberg, and other Texas towns. We finally bought a home in Terrell Hills in 1952 and settled down so my brother could begin 1st grade. Dad would leave early every Monday morning travelling to wherever his job was, returning home late Friday night. I’m one of 3 children, in fact, I’m the middle child. My brother, Mike, was 14 months older than me. Sadly, he passed away almost 3 years ago. The baby of the family is my sister, Janene, who lives in West Columbia, Texas. Dad’s job was very stressful and extremely exhausting. He passed away in 1970 of a massive heart attack at the young age of 48. The last road my dad built was Blanco Road from Bitters to 1604. Mom was a very strong woman and took on the responsibility of raising my sister who was just beginning high school, babysitting my brother’s son, and learning to live “alone”.

**NEWSLETTER - MAY, 2018**

(NSARTA HEARTS CONTINUED)
I graduated from MacArthur High School in 1965. My mom always called me a “social butterfly” because I was in so many organizations in high school and college. During the summers, I worked at Holt Machinery Company as a substitute for company secretaries on vacation. It was an interesting job and I learned much from those great employees who all became “moms and dads” to me during my summers there. I graduated in May of 1969 from Southwest Texas with a BS in Elementary Education and minor in Home Ec. I met my husband, Barry, at MacArthur. He sat behind me in Spanish I class and we began dating as sophomores. Barry attended St. Mary’s University for 2 years before transferring to the University of Texas in Austin. We were planning an early summer wedding but had to postpone it until mid August when Barry graduated. We had a 2 week window in August to marry, Barry graduate, and me begin my first year of teaching 6th grade at Camelot Elementary. We married August 15, 1969 after dating for 6 years. This year we will celebrate our 49th anniversary, but if you also count all the years we dated, it will be our 55th anniversary. We spent our honeymoon at the Round Holiday Inn on Town Lake since Barry would be taking his finals the next week. He went to study groups and took finals while I wrote lesson plans and made bulletin boards. The week passed, school started and Barry began interviewing for jobs. He was offered a great job with a national company but the company wanted him to have his 2S (student deferment) draft status changed before they would hire him. While Barry was at St. Mary’s and UT, he tried to join ROTC knowing upon graduation, he would be joining the military. However, during his physical exam at both universities the doctors said he had a heart murmur and wasn’t a candidate for ROTC. In order to change his draft status, Barry would need to volunteer for the draft, and go downtown to have his physical knowing his murmur would keep him out of the service. Well, it didn’t …… he called me at school that afternoon saying he passed the physical and would be leaving that night for Ft. Bliss in El Paso, Texas for basic training. This happened the 4th day of the new school year. I met him at the airport, said “goodbye” and fell apart when I got home. Somehow, I managed to survive the first semester of teaching but resigned in January at the end of the semester to join Barry. He was stationed at Ft. Jackson, South Carolina for 7 months before receiving orders for Viet Nam. My Dad had recently passed away so I moved back home with my mom and sister. After 14 months, Barry came home and we were finally able to set up our first home. NEISD was good to me and I was hired to teach 1st and 4th grades at Walzem Elementary. After 3 years, another job transfer took us to Denver, Colorado where Barry was a Regional Drug Sales Manager. In 1978, we were transferred back to San Antonio and I was fortunate to be hired to open Hidden Forest Elementary. Barry began his career with State Farm Insurance, retiring in 2012. I retired in 2003 with 33 years all in NEISD classrooms.

Our son, Brandon, lives in Keller, Texas and is an area sales manager for Georgia Pacific/Bluelinx. He is a single parent of our only grandchild, Jordyn. She is very much a girly girl who loves to fish and hunt with her dad and “Pods”(Barry). Brandon is a wonderful, active, involved dad. Jordyn is 12 years old going on 21 some days and 6 other days. She begins 7th grade next year so her dad will have his hands full. We have a 12 year old Yorkie, Gizmo, who rules our house.

Barry and I both enjoy fishing, hunting (him hunting and me just being out in the country), gardening, going to antique shows, and being with family and friends. As the eldest girl in our extended family, I’ve planned family reunions for the past 12 years. I organize monthly luncheons for retired Hidden Forest teachers and I’ve been a member of the MAC65 Reunion Committee for 50 years. In fact, our group still meets each month for dinner. The old saying is true, “The Best Antiques Are Old Friends!”

I’d like to acknowledge how fortunate I’ve been to work with wonderful, creative, loving, and innovative faculties at each school I’ve taught. I have learned so much from all of these educators I’ve worked with – from setting up my first classroom, balancing those old dreaded registers, learning new computer programs, serving on district committees, handling unhappy problem parents, and much, much more. I’d also like to thank NSARTA members for allowing me to serve as 2nd Vice President, Chairman of the Notification Committee, and member of the Hospitality, Professional Enhancement, and Public Relations/Awards Committees.
A little post script on Michele: Mrs. Yates and I both worked with “Mich” at Hidden Forest Elementary and can attest to the extremely unique and spectacular teacher and staff member she was. She was a motivating, creative First grade teacher when we opened HF together. I did not know her before this but from day one we had an immediate connection like life-long friends. She taught me so much.

Barbara remembers the banner Michele had across her classroom—MRS. BIBB’S BUSY BEES---That is an appropriate description of Michele herself. She is always busy helping others, staying with her sick cousin, insisting that she drive to all events and lending an ear for any friend who needs her. How many people do you know that would come to the hospital and paint a friend’s nails to make them feel “normal” during an extended hospital stay. She did that for me and I will never forget it. Barbara said she had misspelled Michele’s name for many years and didn’t realize it ’till she gave her a birthday party and wrote on the cake HAPPY BIRTHDAY, MICHELLE. One of the other teachers told Barbara. Michele had not said a word for fear of hurting Barbara’s feelings. She also helped Barbara develop learning centers when she moved from Fifth grade to 2nd grade. These are just some of the many acts illustrating her empathetic and caring spirit. You are the best, Michele and loved and appreciated by all.  

Betty Moseley

LEGISLATIVE/FOUNDATION  Carlos Ortiz

We hope you voted in the May 5 election. Now turn your attention to the Runoff Election on May 22. Please fulfill your obligation because we need to elect folks who will help education as well as retirees.

This summer we need to prepare our letters so that can send them to elected State Senators and Representatives after the General Election in November. You can write about your shopping for groceries or clothing by telling those legislators how much items have increased; yet you have not received an ad hoc increase in your TRS annuity.

The TRS Board had 2 votes to lower the rate of return on the TRS investments in April. Both failed to get a majority. The rate of return on the investments may be considered again in July.

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

Greetings All,

It is hard to believe that we are closing out the 2017-2018 NSARTA year! My hope is that you found the programs to be engaging, educational and relevant. We are already working on the program schedule for the coming year. Tim Lee, TRTA Executive Director will again kick-off the year in September and, especially since another legislative session is looming, there will be an even greater focus on connecting with our elected officials and being knowledgeable of proposed bills and actions in Austin.

At the TRTA State Convention in April, Tim Lee charged us with standing up for ourselves and making our voices heard in Austin and at the voting booth. He reminded us that there are 350,000 educators out there but only 88,000+ are active with the only group representing retired educators—TRTA! I encourage you to reach out to your friends and let them know that for $50 membership dues they will receive monthly updates from TRTA as well as our newsletter. While we would like to see them at meetings, it is not necessary to attend to stay informed and participate. It is vital that our voices are united, loud and persistent!

In the meantime, we will bid this year goodbye at our May 16th POTLUCK EXTRAVAGANZA! Do not miss this yummy event.
NSARTA BIG READ BOOK CLUB update: A lively group met on May 2nd to discuss *Before We Were Yours* by Lisa Wingate. 100% of the group LOVED this book which sparked a great discussion about changing social norms and values, keeping “family secrets” and even how technology in our world opens us up to “surprises” from DNA tests and searching for our family roots.

On July 11 we will meet at the home of Laurie Harris to discuss *The Train to Crystal City* by SA author Jan Jarboe Russell and now available in paperback. As one book club member noted, “I grew up here and never knew this happened in Texas.” If you’d like to join us and learn more, contact Peggy Peterson at 210.373.3961 or rpete4321@satx.rr.com for information.

SUMMER FUN MEET-UPS....

🌟 WEDNESDAY, MAY 30TH 11:30 - Homemade Pizza & Salad Lunch & Wine Tasting at Lara Vineyard near Bulverde off 281 North. Sign-up and RSVP with your payment of $26.10.

🌟 SATURDAY, JUNE 16TH - Sandy Oaks Olive Orchard Tour & Lunch. Tour is free and lunch is optional but we need to give an estimated head count for lunch.

SIGN-UP FOR MEET-UPS at May meeting or by contacting me at 210.373.3961 or rpete4321@satx.rr.com

---

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

As of May 1, 2018,

NSARTA checking account balance : $1,069.78

More details at our next meeting, Wednesday, May 16th.

---

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY  Barbara Yates 494-6444

A *Thinking of You* card was sent to Eddy English, who is undergoing treatments for cancer.

A *Sympathy card* was sent to former member, Dorothy Warras, whose husband passed away and to the family of Nelda Andrewartha, who passed away April 29th. Nelda had been a member of NSARTA for a long time but in the last year was not able to participate. Our caring thoughts are with all of these and their families.
MEMBERSHIP  Harold Black

We are trying to win $500.00 by having the highest % of membership increase by our May filing for a unit with 200 and 300 members. We now, as of 5.2.18, have 138 renewals or new memberships for 2018-2019, but that is not ½ of our last years’ memberships.

Please renew today!!!!

March marked the official start of our membership drive. Other units were ahead of us last month so we must work harder. SO, if you, or retirees you know have not joined or only joined at the state level, invite them to join us. Please complete the appropriate form below and either send it to me or bring it to the meeting with your $50.00 membership fee.

REMEMBER!!! NSARTA’s local dues are only $15.00 for you or someone who has joined at the state level. We need all the members we can get to have our needs heard in the next legislature.

Use the following form to renew your membership for 2018-2019. If you wish to become a Diamond member, you may get the forms needed, from Harold at the meeting.

IF YOU HAVE BEEN A TRTA/NSARTA MEMBER FOR AT LEAST THE LAST THREE CONSECUTIVE YEARS, PLEASE USE THE ANNUAL RENEWAL FORM.

TRTA/NSARTA ANNUAL RENEWAL MEMBERSHIP FORM 2018-2019

NAME ________________________________________________________________

ADDRESS ______________________________________ CITY __________________ ZIP CODE _______

PHONE __________________ EMAIL _________________________ TODAY’S DATE_________

School district from which you retired ________________________________ Retirement Year ________

ANNUAL RENEWAL: TRTA $35.00 and NSARTA $15.00 = TOTAL AMOUNT $50.00

Make check payable to NSARTA for the total amount of $50.00. CHECK # ______

If by mail, send to: Harold Black, 13307 Sage Heights Dr, San Antonio, TX 78230-5847

YOUR MEMBERSHIP IS NEEDED!
STITCHERY  Ledru Barker

We provided 720 pillows, 18 quilts, and 100 bags to the VA Hospital. We have yarn available for any one who wants to crochet or knit at your own house. You can then deliver the afghan to any of us in the Stitchery Group.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Retirement Education  Bertha Villarreal-Colunga

Thank you NSARTA members for your membership. The Texas Retired Teachers Association, along with District 20, care so much about retired teachers. They want us to be all we can be during our retirement. NSARTA gives us information and shows interest in our needs.

NSARTA sees the good qualities that we all have in getting involved and participating in helping others. While letting us know that no matter what happens, they will be there to help us along.

Our officers and committee chairs show their devotion by making us feel that there is no reason why we cannot succeed. Thank heavens for friends like you who give us the encouragement all of us need.

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

As always, we enjoyed a variety of wonderful treats at our April meeting. Many thanks to Laurie Harris, Patti Evans, Carolyn Pfeiffer, Pat Loewe, Sue Blom, Kay Kelley, and Joyce Gallegos for providing the delicious food.

NSARTA would like to thank all members who were so generous to provide treats for each of our 2017-2018 meetings. Michele Bibb

CHILDRENS’BOOK PROJECT  Sherlyn Valentin, Nancy Dooley, Pat Loewe

On May 21st, NSARTA will be distributing books to the students of Valley Hi Elementary in Northside ISD from 8:30 a.m. until 1:30 p.m. Our group should be at Valley Hi by 8:00 a.m. to set up the books. Snacks and water will be provided for the NSARTA group. If you would like to participate in distributing the books to the students, please contact Sherlyn Valentin (210-365-9185), Nancy Dooley, or Pat Loewe. If you need a ride, please contact us as well. The address for Valley Hi Elementary is 8503 Ray Ellison Drive and Jennifer Grimes is the librarian. Thanks again to the members of NSARTA for your book and cash donations this past year.
VOLUNTEERING

Janet Pennock

Summer is fast approaching. Don't forget to keep up with your volunteer hours. Activities that could be considered volunteering; babysitting young and old, transporting friends or family to and from a doctor's appointment, attending professional meetings or conventions, working at the food pantry, church related projects, jury duty, helping at elections, helping provide meals after or before a funeral. Let's show the state of Texas that retired teachers make an impact on the community. If you have a question about volunteer hours, please contact me at 979-417-3876 or japennock57@icloud.com.
A WORLD OF FRIENDS IS A WORLD OF PEACE.

OUR ACTIVITIES:
We host one or more inbound exchanges from other countries each year. We share our Texas lifestyle, homes, and families as home hosts, day hosts, or club members for usually a one week period.

We travel on one or more outbound exchanges to other countries each year. We become part of another family’s life and lifestyle for one to two weeks. We may include additional side tours.

We travel to and host other American clubs for inter-club exchanges.

We meet monthly for cultural enrichment, fun and fellowship.

We attend international and regional conferences and festivals.

We promote international understanding and personal friendships.

FRIENDSHIP FORCE (FF) is a private, non-profit organization that works to build global goodwill through its international exchange program. The national office of FF arranges for a club (from one country or state) to spend a week with a sister club from another country or state. During that time, members (called “ambassadors”) stay in the homes of host members, visit places of interest and are involved in activities that reflect the history, community life, and culture of the host country (or state).

BENEFITS — DONE THAT!

Some of the places we have been on Friendship Force exchanges:
Australia, New Zealand, Russia, Brazil, Venezuela, England, Japan, Turkey, Republic of Georgia, Austria, Germany, Canada, and Taiwan.

Some of the countries that have visited us:
Australia, Japan, Germany, Ukraine, Scotland, Russia, Italy, England, Brazil, Austria, Turkey, Canada, Latvia, Costa Rica, Japan, and Taiwan.

Some of our members also travel with other clubs on their trips. You may be a member of more than one club if you wish. You do not have to live in their “area”.

From the Alamo to the Pagoda or Sphinx.
The Art of Aging Gracefully

Experts say the keys to successful aging include accepting changes and finding meaningful activities.

By Katherine Kam

FROM THE WEBMD ARCHIVES

Experts who have worked with thousands of seniors share their insights into how you can navigate emotional challenges in order to age gracefully.

The Old Are Survivors

It's true that aging brings hardships, but remember that the old are survivors -- a select group. Wisdom, resilience and a mature perspective are often cited as the hard-won prizes of aging. But growing old itself is an accomplishment.

"But if you get to be older, you have survived a lot of the threats to your physical and psychological integrity that have affected other people who are no longer around," psychologist Whitbourne says.

A dose of healthy denial can improve outlook in one's later years, she adds. "The people who do the best with aging aren't thinking that much about getting older. They're not really focusing on what's not working anymore. If you sit around mulling over the meaning of existence and how time is running out, you're building in a scenario where you're not going to age as successfully."

Accepting Changes

Accept the inevitable changes of aging, rather than seeing them as aberrant crises.

Through good luck or good genes or both, the old have dodged fatal accidents, premature disease, and other things that kill the young. "You are stronger, and you get to live longer," she says. "Most people think that's a benefit."

Finding Meaningful Activities

Continue to find meaning later in life.

"Retirement has always been a time when we see people withdraw from their roles," says Pauline Abbott, EdD, director of gerontology at the Institute of Gerontology, California State University, Fullerton. During this risky time, some older people succumb to depression and a sense of meaninglessness.

"Part of the challenge of aging gracefully is that you have to continue to find things that are important to you," Frazier says.

That can include travel, spiritual pursuits, hobbies, new social groups, lifelong learning, or recapturing time with family if one lacked the chance during the career years, experts say.

Plan for purposeful activities before you retire, Abbott says. "It should be a transition. It shouldn't be, 'Stop work one day and fall off a cliff.' It's time to follow where your passions lie."