

The Heart of NSARTA

NSARTA NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2019



Sue Blom



Paul Cwiklik



Georgia Couch

PRESIDENT'S CORNER RAISE THE BASE! RAISE THE BASE! More than 700 delegates and nearly 800 TRTA members joined their voices in clamorous chants to rally support at this year's 66th Annual TRTA Convention, hosted at the Austin Hilton venue on April 1, 2, and 3. Their mounting enthusiasm climaxed on April 3 at the Texas State Capitol for the TRTA Rally Day.



Our Goal: Secure the support of the Texas State legislators in the House of Representatives and Senate for: (1) Improved funding for the TRS Pension Plan; (2) A Meaningful Benefit Increase for Retirees; (3) Improved Funding for TRS—Care; and (4) Provisions that Make it Easier for Retirees to Return to Work.

In their aggregate, more than 30 House and Senate legislative proposals are on the table to effect improvements in those four critical areas of retired teacher concerns.

The overwhelming turn out by retired teachers from throughout the state was enough to simultaneously fill both chambers of the legislature to their capacity, causing a “lockout” to those waiting in line in crowded hallways and stair wells at the entrances to the respective spectator galleries.

With more to be done in gaining recognition and support, hundreds of retirees swarmed the sprawling lengths of hallways, stairwells, and elevators to the cloistered offices of their constituent lawmakers to meet, greet, and leave messages asking for pledges of support for the more that 900,000 retired Texas educators.

As shuttle buses came and went throughout the day, from and to the hotel, charter buses pulled up outside the capitol grounds dropping off and picking up hundreds more exercising their right to petition their government

(President's message continued)

for assistance in searching for a better life after having given their dedicated service to educating the children of the great State of Texas.

Out on the capitol grounds, retirees gathered to hear words from TRTA and TRS officials who encouraged their continued engagement with lawmakers. To that end, it is important to note that since NSARTA members started writing their own letters to their representatives and senators, Carlos Ortiz has hand-delivered nearly 300 letters to the offices of their intended receivers.

Even the casual observer could not avoid being awesomely impressed by the unbounded enthusiasm of all those who ventured the miles traveled from their homes to witness one of the greatest privileges and rights of American democracy in action. God bless America!

NSARTA HEARTS FOR APRIL Michelle Bibb

Our April Hearts of NSARTA are Sue Blom and Georgia Couch. One is a Texan by birth with a slow southern drawl and the other a Texan by choice with a very British accent. No matter how they became Texans, we are certainly glad they both retired in San Antonio and are active members of NSARTA

Sue Blom *"I was born near Luton, Bedfordshire, England in July, 1945. Due to extensive damage to the town from the bombing of WW II, housing was limited, and my mother and I lived with my grandparents in the countryside. My father was an RAF pilot who had been killed in action seven months before I was born. By the time I was five, enough new houses had been built and mother and I moved into town. I met my husband at a friend's Christmas party in 1962. We married in 1963 and have two children who were both born in San Angelo, Texas. We recently celebrated our 55th anniversary. During my husband's career in the Air Force, we had postings in Texas three times, plus Arizona, Naples, Italy, Ohio, and Iowa, where my husband received an Air Force scholarship to pursue a graduate degree in Engineering. I finally managed to complete my Education Degree at Wright State University in Dayton, Ohio in 1979, and started my career with a Library and teaching position at Cedar Cliff High School. In 1981 we relocated to San Antonio. Not long after that our children gave us an ultimatum saying they would not move again so four years later my husband retired from the Air Force and we settled in San Antonio. Currently our daughter is residing in San Francisco, and our son in Cedar Park, Texas! My first teaching position here was at Mark Twain Middle School in SAISD. I then moved to the Northside ISD, and four years later to NEISD as an Elementary School Librarian. A few years later I received my Masters degree in Counseling from UTSA, and served in that capacity at both El Dorado and Northern Hills Elementary schools for twelve years until retiring in 2003. After retirement I did continue working part-time for five years, as a counselor in NEISD, and then as a High School librarian, in Comal. Presently we are enjoying our retirement, our travels, and simply being grandparents here in San Antonio."*

Georgia Couch *"I was born and grew up in Texas City. I have one sister, Roxie, who lives at Canyon Lake. I have one brother, Alan, who lives in Laredo and one brother, Gene, who is deceased. Both of my parents are deceased also. I got my degrees from Stephen F. Austin. I earned a Bachelor of Science and a Masters of Education in Counseling & Guidance. I taught for 38 years and worked at Chicos for 15 years. I belong to*

Theta Beta DKG Society, Delta Zeta-Zet Psi Sorority, SACOP, SAWF, SAC council, and serve as Area 6 Coordinator.

I have served as NSARTA Committee Chair for the Education of Retired Members, President of DKG, corresponding Secretary and Vice President of SAWF. I coordinate table decorations for the SA council of presidents.

I met my husband at a martini party. Although he is now deceased, we had two children, Dona and Kevin. My two grandsons, Glenn, 13years, and Josh, 10 years, are my only grandchildren. I do have 4 step-children, Chuck, Cheryl, Kelly and Mary Kay.

Two things I enjoy are traveling and decorating. I recently traveled to the Grand Turk Islands, Amber Cove at Thanksgiving. I decorate for several organizations I belong to and really enjoy this.

I am in the process of downsizing currently, and am selling my home to move to an apartment. At this point in my life, I am looking forward to having a smaller space to keep up with but deciding what stays with me is a challenge.”

LEGISLATIVE/FOUNDATION *Carlos Ortiz*



Having passed the deadline almost all Bills in the State Capitol are in Committee or have been voted on by each respective chamber. HB 3 relates to School Finance and according to Rep. Bernal it needs to be refined before it is passed on. SB 500 has in it \$300 million to each ERS and TRS and the money will be taken from the Rainy Day Fund. In my opinion, SB 500 is just words. The two Bills that will need to be refined by the Joint Committee of Senate and House members are SB 12 and HB 9. SB 12 increases the contribution rates of the Members, School Districts, and the State and it should make the TRS Fund actuarially sound in 2024. It also has a cost of living for retirees of \$500. HB 9 increases the contribution rates for Members and State; however, the School District rate remains at its present level. This would make the TRS Fund actuarially sound in 2025. HB 9 has a cost of living of \$2400 for retirees. Reading the legal language is not easy and right now it is just words. This means to us that as soon as the Joint Committee is formed from members of the Senate and House, Betty or Paul or I will alert you. Get your letters ready to bombard those members that compose the Joint committee.

Door Prizes



One of the favorite moments in a NSARTA meeting is the drawing for the door prizes. They are always so beautifully and creatively displayed in gift bags. This new spot in our Newsletter will be a sharing of those who received the door prizes, in appreciation of the time and effort Maureen Cwiklik expends on providing these unique little gifts. In March, Ledru Barker got the cup towels and Betty Moseley got the colorful spring hot pads and mitt that are pictured above. No one else reported their door prize but next month we will be accustomed to reporting and more will appear. Thank you, Maureen.

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



As of April 3, 2019, NSARTA

checking- account balance is \$1,172.07.

More details at our next meeting, Wednesday, April 17

HAPPY EASTER TO ALL!!



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



VIVA NSARTA! VIVA FIESTA! VIVA SPRING! VIVA PRIMIVERA!

Spring is finally here (for the most part)! The wildflowers are amazing and bring smiles to our faces, so let's box up the winter clothes, dig out our colorful fiesta-wear and guayaberas and get this party started! **Viva Fiesta San Antonio!**

This month at NSARTA we will *Grow Our Minds* as we welcome NSARTA Yearbook Sponsors, Jake Yetterberg from Yetterberg Retirement Solutions and Pamela Neel of Pamela Neel Real Estate Group/Keller Williams Realty. These outstanding professionals will bring information focused on retiree issues. Don't miss this great information.

Spring Social Meet-Up -- Mark your calendars for Monday, April 15th from 4:00-6:00! Let's celebrate the passing of TAX DAY with fun and fellowship at La Hacienda de los Barrios at 18747 Redland Road (off 1604). They have a lovely, shaded patio and will do their best to provide lovely spring weather! An early bird menu is available until 5:30!

Annual May Potluck Luncheon -- Don't miss this scrumptious event! Sign up at the April meeting.

BIG READ BOOK CLUB SCHEDULE

Wed, May 8th at 1:00 -- *The Daughter of the Daughter of the Queen* by Sarah Bird.

Wed, July 10th -- *America's First Daughter* by Stephanie Dray & Laura Kamoie

Wed, Sept. 11th -- *Educated* by Tara Westover

Call me with questions.



CORRESPONDING SECRETARY Barbara Yates 494-6444



Sympathy cards were sent to Lorey Meredith, whose brother passed away and to Linda Nolder, whose sister-in-law passed away. A thinking of you card was sent to Nancy Denning, whose husband was in the hospital.

MEMBERSHIP Harold Black



Our new membership year is off and running. TRTA will have a new incentive campaign this year similar to last years'. NSARTA did not do well on new members last year and we need to put extra effort into membership this year. We've only got 43 renewals as of April 5th. PLEASE renew NOW and send your form and check to Harold." **We need YOU to renew and then find another retired teacher to activate.** The legislature is in session, we're sending letters and emails to our reps, NOW help us to grow and impress our legislators with numbers.

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 2019-2020

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

NSARTA

You are invited to join us in the efforts we are making to improve retirement benefits and to be of service in our community.

We meet at:

**SAN PEDRO PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
14900 SAN PEDRO AVENUE
SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS, 78232
210-494-6560**

We always meet on the third Wednesday of each month. We have our social gathering at 9:30 a. m. and our meeting is from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Our dues are \$50 - \$35 of this goes to the state.

Come join in the fun!

COMMITTEE REPORTS

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

Barbara Rothe 380-8150, Linda Nolder 490-1035



Thank you to Sue Sim, Sherlyn Valentin, Michele Bibb, Judy McFeaters, and Adele Murphy for providing refreshments for our March meeting. As always, it was delicious and appreciated.

Michele Bibb

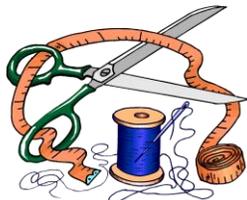
CHILDRENS' BOOK PROJECT *Sherlyn Valentin, Nancy Dooley, Pat Loewe*



On Friday, May 31st, NSARTA members will be distributing books to the students at Valley Hi Elementary. We hope you can join us that morning. Next fall the Children's Book Project will be helping another school. One suggestion for a new school has already been given. Other suggestions will be welcome in case this school does not wish to participate. Thanks to all of the members who gave donations this year. We had a total of \$229.80 to use to buy books at the NEISD PTA used book sale on April 12th. A big thank you to Nancy Dooley, for her donation this month of books to the Children's Book Project.

STITCHERY

Ledru Barker



Please join us to stuff pillows. The meeting is April 4, at 10 AM at Covenant Presbyterian church. We received 10 more quilts from Kay Rozene. We love being able to take quilts and pillows to the VA Hospital. Don't forget to bring donations to NSARTA meetings. We meet May 2, for the last time until September.

VOLUNTEERING

Janet Pennock japennock57@icloud.com

Did you know things you do at church can count as volunteer hours. Some examples are teaching Sunday School, serving on a church committee, transporting someone to and from church or even that casserole you made for the bereavement committee. If you have questions about what counts, please contact me.

INDEPENDENCE HILL OPPORTUNITY

If you didn't get to sign up for the tour of Independence Hill Retirement Village at the April meeting, but would like to go, please call or email Betty Moseley at 210 494 1080 or bmoseley@swbell.net. This visit is scheduled for 11:00 a.m. on Wednesday, May 1st.





HEALTH *Eddy English*

Every April, the Parkinson's Foundation engages the global Parkinson's community to support Parkinson's Awareness Month. When we raise awareness about Parkinson's and how the Foundation helps make lives better for people with PD, we can do more together to improve care and advance research toward a cure.

So what exactly is Parkinson's disease?

Parkinson's disease is a type of movement disorder that can affect the ability to perform common, daily activities. It is a chronic and progressive disease, meaning that the symptoms become worse over time. It is characterized by its most common of motor symptoms—tremors (a form of rhythmic shaking), stiffness or rigidity of the muscles, and slowness of movement (called bradykinesia)—but also manifests in non-motor symptoms including sleep problems, constipation, anxiety, depression, and fatigue, among others.

Early Onset Parkinson's

Though it's uncommon, Parkinson's can also afflict young people.

There are an estimated 1 million Americans living with Parkinson's disease and more than 10 million people worldwide. Most people who develop the symptoms of Parkinson's disease do so sometime after the age of 50, but Parkinson's disease [can affect younger persons](#) as well. Approximately 10% of Parkinson's diagnoses occur before age 50—these diagnoses are called Early Onset (or Young Onset) Parkinson's disease.

What are the primary motor symptoms of Parkinson's Disease?

There are five primary motor symptoms of Parkinson's disease:

- tremor,
- rigidity,
- bradykinesia (slow movement),
- postural instability (balance problems), and
- walking/gait problems. Observing one or more of these symptoms is the main way that physicians [diagnose Parkinson's](#).

It is important to know that not all of these symptoms must be present for a diagnosis of Parkinson's disease to be considered. In fact, younger people may only notice one or two of these motor symptoms, especially in the early stages of the disease. Not everyone with Parkinson's disease has a tremor, nor is a tremor proof of Parkinson's. If you suspect Parkinson's, see a neurologist or movement disorders specialist.

NSARTA
14219 Turtle Rock St.
San Antonio, Texas 78232

OR CURRENT RESIDENT

APRIL 2019