Greetings and Welcome All to January 2021!

My husband and I closed the book on 2020 and toasted the possibilities of 2021 at home by securing appointments for the Covid vaccine. Never in my life would I have envisioned such a New Year’s Eve scenario. Thanks to a friend sharing the link, after multiple tries, we signed up for January 8th and 9th appointments. It was then I realized my wait and see attitude had changed to get it done! Even more surprising was how I felt after receiving the vaccine. I experienced a lightening of my spirit, as if hope had blossomed in my heart, something I really needed after the tragic events of January 6th in Washington D.C.

As NSARTA President, I promise that we will continue to work hard to bring our members together in a spirit of hope, love and laughter while facing the reality of challenges that 2020 has forced upon us. We will support TRTA’s legislative priorities, make our voices heard in Washington and Austin, and be more of a presence in our community. Remember, there are over 400,000 retired educators in Texas and nearly 100,000 are TRTA members! Sounds like a joyful choir just waiting to be heard! Help NSARTA move forward by carefully reading the newsletter (you might be a big prize winner!), participating in monthly Zoom meetings (more prizes
there!) and supporting local projects. I challenge you to *Be the Rainbow in Someone Else’s Cloud* as we make our way through 2021 together.

**NEWSLETTER - January, 2021  (President’s message continued)  PAGE 2**

Here are some things you need to know:

- **NSARTA JANUARY 20TH MEETING TIME CHANGE TO 9:30 A.M.**
  - Because of the Presidential Inauguration on Wednesday, January 20, 2021 NSARTA will shorten our meeting to one hour.
  - ZOOM will open at 9:00 a.m. for fellowship. Meeting will begin at 9:30 a.m.
  - Program ~ COVID Vaccine News & Information

- **Community Service Porch Pick-Up Project for January**
  - SAMMinistries has let us know that their greatest need right now is for **FULL SIZE PERSONAL CARE PRODUCTS**
    - FOR MEN - Shampoo, conditioner, deodorant, body wash, shaving cream & razors (NOT disposable)
    - FOR WOMEN – Shampoo, conditioner, deodorant, body wash, tampons & pads, razors (NOT disposable).
    - Dollar stores are an excellent source for these products.
  - Our *Merry Band of NSARTA Porch Elves*, organized by zip code, will pick up and deliver your items.
  - Watch for email with collection days, Elf assignments & contact information coming soon!

- **Thank You! Thank You!** To all NSARTA members that donated to our December Community Service Project for SAMMinistries. Our Pillows and Paper Towels project was a HUGE success! SAMM was thrilled to receive multiple carloads and let us know that they will soon be “flying off the shelves” as they move clients into new transitional housing.

- **NSARTA also held its first Porch Cookie Exchange in December!** 13 members participated and yummy treats were shared in time for the holidays. I did learn that I am not much of a baker but will be practicing on my grandkids as I strive to up my game for next year!

- **Another NSARTA FIRST!** Our December ZOOM Bingo and Sing Along was a resounding success. With lots of laughter and generally off-key singing, members joyfully welcomed the holidays. What a great end to a challenging year. Thanks to Barb Rothe for organizing and for delivering beautiful poinsettias to our 6 bingo winners!

- **ZOOM Prizes!** Members tell us they really like our monthly ZOOM prizes so we are upping the ante!
  - Attend ALL NSARTA meetings this spring (*January through May*) to be eligible for our **GRAND ZOOM PRIZE DRAWING**. Only members that attend all meetings will be eligible for the May drawing.
  - Read our fabulous newsletter, answer the questions and send your answers to Betty Moseley. Winner will be announced at the meeting but you do not need to be present to win.
  - Four Zoom prizes are given away at the end of each monthly meeting to lucky members that have attended the entire meeting.

**PROGRAM  1st VP  Barbara Rothe  210-380-8150  barbrothe@sbcglobal.net**
Hello January 2021… I love saying 2021! Blessings for the New Year with faith, hope and love… and happily, I imagine, we are all thrilled to write the date 2021 on our checks… yes, I still write checks. Maybe, one of my goals should be to learn how to do finances online! My daughters would be so proud!

**NEWSLETTER - January, 2021 (Program continued)**

**Thank you:** To all our members who helped make our NSARTA December meeting so much fun; full of laughter, music and Bingo! Members participated by individualizing their own Bingo card by filling out their Bingo squares with words or phrases associated with NSARTA. A beautiful poinsettia was delivered to the Bingo winners. Congratulations to: Barbara Johns, Delores Ramon, Sue Sims, Carolyn Varian, Lori Armstrong, and Barbara Yates.

**Our annual holiday sing-along will definitely go down in the books!** Possibly we should become competitive with a new TV show, “Texas Retired Teachers Have Talent!” It was hilarious and fun! I can still hear Paul’s fabulous and distinctive voice and, of course, the many others that sang their hearts out with lovely holiday songs. One beautiful voice was heard above all others… I think that was mine! ~ lol… truly just kidding!!

**January Program:** January 20th! (3rd Wednesday of the month). We will have a short meeting. The Board has decided to adjourn our meeting early in order for us to watch the inauguration of our new President Elect Joe Biden. We also plan to give information about the roll-out of the COVID vaccine sites and distribution.

We are looking forward to “seeing” all of our fabulous members on Zoom. ID and Passcode will be sent in a separate email from Peggy.

**NSARTA Big Read Book Club:** We met on January 6th and had some lively discussions on our latest two reads. We also chose our selections for our next book club reads.

In March we will discuss *The Vanishing Half* by Brit Bennett. This book examines sisterhood, personal identity, starting fresh, and what it means to be Black (and white) in America. Bennett is known for creating taut family dramas this novel shows just how strong the bonds of sisters are, even at their weakest.

In May we will discuss *Little Fires Everywhere* by Celeste Ng. This is a novel that traces the intertwined fates of the picture-perfect Richardson family and the enigmatic mother and daughter who up-end their lives. It explores the weight of secrets, the nature of art and identity, and the ferocious pull of motherhood—and the danger of believing that following the rules can avert disaster.

In July we will discuss *The Orphan Collector* by Ellen Marie Wiseman. A heartbreaking saga of resilience and hope—set in Philadelphia during the 1918 Spanish Flu outbreak—the deadly pandemic that went on to infect one-third of the world’s population- a touching tale of loss, survival, and perseverance with some light fantastical elements. It will let you make comparisons to the Covid 19 pandemic.

If any of these books interest you, please join us the first Wednesday of the month at 1:30. Right now we are on Zoom. Let Peggy know if you would like to join our discussions on any of these books. **Submitted by Patti Evans**

**Community Service:** We are collecting nonperishable food, cleaning supplies and/or personal care items to be delivered at the end of January to our charities that we support. Information about picking up items
Our January HEARTS of NSARTA are Beth and Jerry Ankrom. This married couple retired from NEISD and now fill their days with volunteering, chauffeuring, painting, hunting, taking care of family and friends, and treasuring their time together. NSARTA is proud to have them as members and we know you’ll enjoy learning more about this busy couple.

Beth and Jerry Ankrom. “I’m Elizabeth, but I prefer to be called Beth. I grew up in the Amarillo area as the youngest of four children. I have two older sisters, and an older brother. They are 16, 13, and 10 years older, so I am the “SUPER baby of the family”. My dad was a Methodist minister, and my mother was a teacher. I graduated Magna Cum Laude from McMurry University in Abilene, Texas in 1977 with a BS in Elementary Education and an art minor. My “claim to fame” at McMurry was my role as Snoopy in “You’re a Good Man Charlie Brown”. This came in handy while teaching, as I would sometimes do my “Suppertime” routine to reward my students for good behavior.

During my 30 years in education, I have taught first grade, third grade, art classes for 4th-6th graders, Gifted and Talented K-5, and Title 1 Reading K-5. I became the Success for All Facilitator at Larkspur Elementary, and the Instructional Intervention Teacher at El Dorado Elementary. I have lived in Texas my entire life, and taught in Abilene, Temple, Lubbock, Universal City (at a private school), and finally in San Antonio. I retired in May of 2010. After retiring, I was able to travel with my daughter, Crystal, who was a flight attendant at that time. We were able to go to Paris, London, and Edinburgh.

Jerry grew up in the Uvalde area and has an identical twin named Terry. They also have an older brother, Robin. Jerry worked as a plumber after graduating from High School for several years. We met in 1985 at a little church in the Temple/Belton area in the singles group. I was impressed with Jerry’s kindness and ability to fix just about anything. He also was and is a wonderful cook! We got married in 1986. A few years later he decided to become a teacher, so we moved to Lubbock where he attended Texas Tech. He graduated in 1992 with an Education degree specializing in English and Science.

After Jerry’s graduation we moved to San Antonio. Jerry began his teaching career and started a plumbing business with his brother, Terry. Jerry was hired at John Wood Middle School. As a first year teacher, he taught 8th grade Science, 6th grade science, 6th grade social studies, and 6th grade math. He floated from room to room with no classroom of his own. He also supervised lunch duty for both lunch periods. Somehow, he survived and was given whatever he wanted the next year… which was 8th grade science.

Jerry was able to spend the rest of his teaching career as a science teacher at Wood and retired after 25 years in May of 2017. He is now back to being a full-time plumber with his brother at Ankrom Brothers Plumbing.
We have one daughter, Crystal, who is married to Joel Armstrong. They live in Temple, TX with their two adorable little boys (four-year-old Grayson and three-month-old Cooper). Not only do we try to go see the grandkids as often as possible, but we are involved in our church, Bible Study Fellowship International, and mission trips with Evidence Ministries. We both are SCUBA divers but have not done any diving recently. Jerry also loves to hunt, and I love to paint. I am the main chauffeur for Jerry’s parents to all their doctor appointments. I also help take care of a friend with MS. Somehow, there never seems to be enough time to do all the things on the “bucket list”, but we treasure every moment of every stage of life knowing every breath is a gift from God. We trust in Him alone for all that lies ahead.”

We lost several NSARTA members in December. Sympathy cards were sent to the families of our long time members……Elise Townsend, Mary Beth Gerza, Arthur Winden and Ken Lynn. Their deaths were a tremendous loss to us, as many served as officers in our unit. Please keep these families in your prayers as they are learning to live without these special people in their lives.

“ENCOURAGING WORDS”  Barbara Yates, Chaplain  barbyates1@sbcglobal.net

“Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much” - Helen Keller.

Wishing many blessings as we work together in this new year!
I dropped off 12 of Kay Rosene's beautiful quilts at the VA Hospital before Christmas. Here is a photo of one of them. The VA Hospital said they don't need any more pillows just yet so we are at a stall. I also dropped off a box of notecards, Christmas cards, notepads and 2020 calendars for the residents to use.

Reports about the release of COVID-19 vaccines by the end of the year are promising, but plans for distribution are still being worked out.

Once the FDA authorizes one or more vaccines from pharmaceutical manufacturers, vaccines will be distributed to federal- and state-approved locations. For most people living in the U.S., states and territories will make the final decisions on who will get the vaccines and when. States are also working on their own specific vaccination plans.

While we wait for a timeline and more information, there’s no doubt scammers will be scheming. Here’s what you need to know to avoid a vaccine-related scam:

- You likely will not need to pay anything out of pocket to get the vaccine during this public health emergency.
- You can’t pay to put your name on a list to get the vaccine.
- You can’t pay to get early access to the vaccine.
- No one from a vaccine distribution site or health care payer, like a private insurance company, will call you asking for your Social Security number or your credit card or bank account information to sign you up to get the vaccine.
- Beware of providers offering other products, treatments, or medicines to prevent the virus. Check with your health care provider before paying for or receiving any COVID-19-related treatment.

If you get a call, text, email — or even someone knocking on your door — claiming they can get you early access to the vaccine, STOP. That’s a scam. Don’t pay for a promise of vaccine access or share personal information.
information. Instead, report it to the FTC at ReportFraud.ftc.gov or file a complaint with your state or territory attorney general through consumerresources.org, the consumer website of the National Association of Attorneys General. Stay connected to stay informed. Subscribe to consumer alerts from the FTC. When you do, you’ll get updates delivered right to your email inbox. You may also want to check your state or territory attorney general’s website for consumer alerts and other helpful information.

NEWSLETTER - January 2021

Answer the two Newsletter questions correctly to be entered in a drawing and win a great prize. Email or call/text Betty Moseley: bmoseley@swbell.net. 210-219-9881, by January 19th, with your answers. Winners announced at January 20th meeting.

TREASURER’S REPORT   Dolores Ramon  210-386-4533  Dolores.ramon@yahoo.com
Happy New Year Everyone!

I am so proud to be a member of NSARTA! I am proud for many reasons; today, however, I am especially proud because of our monetary contributions to worthy causes. This month, I had to submit a Scholarship/Grant Reporting Form to the district. This report includes money we have contributed to TRTF Helping Hand initiative and to the Children’s Book Project for the 2020 calendar year. I am happy to report that we have donated a total of $600! We are truly living up to this years’ theme and working hard to be a rainbow in someone’s cloud!

As always, I look forward to seeing you at our Zoom meeting and sharing the Treasurer’s Report with you. See you on the 20th!

LEGISLATIVE/ FOUNDATION  Adele Murphy  adelem54@yahoo.com  830-522-0838

The 87th Texas Legislative Session begins on January 12, 2021 and ends May 31, 2021. Since the squeaky wheel gets the grease we need to speak up. I will send the TRTA Legislative Priorities to our legislators next week along with letters thanking them for taking care of us. It would be most helpful if each and every one of you would send at least one letter or email a month to your legislators. If you need help finding your legislators’ addresses, I will be more than happy to help (830-522-0838). The most recent Voice gives excellent talking points and includes the TRTA Legislative Priorities.

I sent holiday cards in December and notes in early January. Lloyd Doggett surprised and pleased me by sending a response to my note that did not appear to be a canned response. Our representatives do like to hear from us. I will be sending them Valentine’s Day cards from NSARTA in February.

Foundation News

Texas Retired Teachers Foundation, TRTF, provides grants and assistance to past, current and future teachers. It recently began the TRTF Tutor Program to assist students and teachers during these chaotic times. Fundraising
has been difficult as a result of the pandemic, but TRTF has received $70,000 since November 1, 2020. Donating is easy, and you can make donations to honor people. Please keep this in mind and donate on line at [trtf.org/donate](trtf.org/donate) or call 1-800-880-1650 and ask for Sarah.

NSARTA Minutes
North San Antonio Retired Teachers Association
Via ZOOM
WEDNESDAY, December 16, 2020

1. President Peggy Peterson called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.
2. Welcome: Peggy welcomed everyone to the fourth virtual meeting for NSARTA of the year. She mentioned protocol for the Zoom meeting today. 40 participants were present today.
3. Invocation: Barbara Yates, Chaplain; Pledges: Paul Cwiklik, Immediate Past President.
4. Officer Reports:
   a. Minutes from November 18, 2020 were approved and filed. Carolyn Pfeiffer, recording secretary, had these minutes previously printed in the December newsletter.
   b. Treasurer’s report, by Dolores Ramon, was reviewed, then approved and filed for audit.
   c. Peggy mentioned that several members donated pillows and paper towels to SAM Ministries in December.
   d. Eleven people signed up to be Porch Elves for delivery of Christmas items for NSARTA Projects this month.
   e. TRTF and Legislative Update given by Peggy for Adele Murphy.
      • Legislative request from Richard Herbst of TRTA District 20 to assist in contacting local state elected representatives. Jim Long volunteered to assist in District 16.
      • TRTF tutoring opportunity is still going strong. Go to the TRTA website for more information.
      • Three Legislative Websites to visit (a non-partisan site):
          myreps.datamade.us
          causes.com
          5calls.org
   f. January 13 is the Ex. Board Meeting and January 20 is the Regular Meeting.
5. NSARTA Christmas Bingo began the festivities on Zoom, followed by a Sing-a-long.
6. Zoom Prizes: will be mailed/delivered to the winners.
   a. Julie Bell won the prize for the December newsletter questions.
   b. Janet Pennock, Paul Cwiklik, Kathy Cooke, Diana Sarfin, and Barb Rothe were the door Zoom prize winners.
   c. Barbara Johns, Sue Sim, Barbara Yates, Carolyn Varian, Dolores Ramon, and Lori Armstrong were the Xmas Bingo winners.
7. Adjournment: 11:28 a.m.
FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS NEEDED  
Linda Nolder  lnolder@aol.com  
Please let Linda know if you have a February birthday or if you know someone in our group with a February birthday. As of the publishing of this newsletter, Linda has no February birthdays. We know that is not accurate so we are depending on our members to correct this.

NEWSLETTER - January 2021  
PAGE 9  
COMMITTEE REPORTS  
BIRTHDAYS  Linda Nolder  lnolder@aol.com  Michele Bibb  mkbibb47@gmail.com  

People born in January have 2 astrological signs – Capricorn (born before Jan 21st) and Aquarius. They are strong leaders and have powerful humanitarian instincts. According to UK researchers, January is the most likely birth month for doctors and CEOs. Winter babies tend to throw less tantrums but sadly are more allergy prone. Famous people born in January are Joan of Arc, Elvis Presley, Martin Luther King, Jr., Oprah, and Dolly Parton. Famous NSARTA members with January birthdays are: Betty Moseley, Mary Jo Watkins, Carol Whitworth, Linda Nolder, Pat Loewe, Beverly Jefferson, Joyce Gallegos, Diana Sarfin, Ray Olvera, Sara Straube, Alicia Arredondo, and Nancy Dooley.

It’s a cold, snowy, rainy day as I’m trying to think of a recipe to share with you. What could be better than a warm bowl of soup with a side of fresh cornbread. I know there are many variations of this recipe but here’s the one I grew up with shared by my sweet Aunt Trelle. She always served this when the family was together enjoying Texas A&M football games on TV. Enjoy!!

TACO SOUP

2 lbs. ground beef  1 lg. onion, chopped
1-4oz. can green chilies  1 tsp. garlic salt
2 pkg. taco seasoning  2 pkg. ranch dressing
1 -14 oz. can hominy  2 -14 oz. cans stewed tomatoes, crushed
1 -15 oz. can pinto beans, undrained  1-15 oz. can ranch style beans, undrained
2-15 oz. cans corn  4-15 oz. cans chicken broth, low sodium
Chopped garlic to taste  Minced cilantro to taste
Salt and pepper to taste
Brown the ground meat with onions in a LARGE pot. Add seasonings and green chilies. Stir in remaining ingredients. Bring to boil and reduce heat to simmer for approximately 1 ½ hours. This makes approximately 8 servings. Any leftover soup can be frozen and saved for another rainy cold day. DON'T FORGET THE CORNBREAD!!

If you have a favorite recipe you’d like to share with us for February, please contact Michele Bibb and we’ll publish it in our Newsletter (210) 494-8197 or mkbibb47@gmail.com

NEWSLETTER - January 2021

CHILDRENS' BOOK PROJECT       Sherlyn Valentin, dhrc@airmail.net  210-365-9185, Pat Loewe, Nancy Dooley & Mary Martinez

Members of NSARTA gave 216 books to children in 2020. A big thank you to Eddy English for donating books to the Children’s Book Project. If any member has given books to a child/grandchild in January for a birthday, shower, special occasion, etc., please text, email, or call Sherlyn Valentin. These books start the count for 2021. Happy New Year!

VOLUNTEERING           Janet Pennock  japennock57@icloud.com, 979-417-3876
105 Firesage, Universal City, Texas, 78148

URGENT! This is the month when I collect your volunteer hours for 2020. I have only had 1 person call me and only 4 send me an email with their hours, normally I collect at least sixty members’ volunteer hours. It is important for us to show that we are vital to our community especially during these difficult times. Please return the form sent to you earlier this month in the special memo on Volunteer Hours or email or call Janet with the information requested.

MEMBER BENEFITS          Sue Sim  210-632-3143

This month I am promoting AMBA Vision policy. You all should have received a TRTA Benefit enrollment for Dental and Vision. An application was enclosed. More info was also included in this mailing. Information on what is covered in the vision benefit, and also dental that I covered last month. Any questions go to MyAMBAbenefits.info/TRTA.

MEMBERSHIP             Eddy English  210-844-1380  eklatt210@satx.rr.com

Our membership drive for 2021-22 will begin in March. The membership forms will be included in the February Newsletter. Please consider the Diamond Plus membership, which keeps you enrolled continuously in TRTA. It is a plan that draws your state dues monthly throughout the year. You will be getting a special email, with the details and forms needed to join the Diamond Plus program. Many of our NSARTA members are diamond members and when March rolls around, all they have to do is pay their local $15.
Our latest membership count is 279.

CONSIDER DIAMOND PLUS MEMBERSHIP WHEN YOU RENEW!

Question #2  Why is it important to report volunteer hours to the State?

NEWSLETTER - January 2021

Health

Mary Ramos  mar23ram@att.net
Happy New Year!!

January Healthy Living Calendar

*Remember to include deep breathing in your busy lifestyle*

Mental Health is as important as physical health. Good mental health contributes greatly to an overall feeling of well being. Reading, walking, and socializing are just a few of the activities that individuals enjoy at any age. Exercising your mind and body and maintaining social connections are good for your mental health, too.

Here are some thoughts, advice, messages of hope, and quotes from some of our old (?) and/or imaginary friends from the past. Maybe help us through these last months of pandemic!

- We have always held to the hope, the belief, and the conviction that there is a better life, a better world, beyond the horizon—Franklin D. Roosevelt
- Hope is bring able to see that there is light despite all the darkness—Desmond Tutu
- But I know, somehow, that only when it is dark enough you can see the stars—Martin Luther King, Jr.
- Happiness is a state of mind. It’s just according to the way you look at things—Walt Disney
- You’re braver than you believe, stronger than you seem, and smarter than you think—Christopher Robin
- Remember, you’re the one who can fill the world with sunshine—Snow White
- It’ll turn out all right in the end, you’ll see—Mrs. Potts, Beauty and the Beast
- Think happy thoughts—Peter Pan
Happy New Year!!

JANUARY, 2021