"Be the rainbow in 2021’s cloud"

NSARTA NEWSLETTER NOVEMBER 2021

Karon & Sharon Wernli

Peggy Peterson

PRESIDENT’S CORNER Peggy Peterson (210)373-3961 casapeggyp@gmail.com

Welcome to November 2021....

I LOVE the cooler temps of November and the anticipation of upcoming holidays. This year my family added a celebration to the month with the marriage of our daughter on a gorgeous fall day overlooking the Guadalupe River. I feel so blessed and hopeful as I look towards the holidays and the new year. Moving forward we will have another hybrid meeting (in person and on Zoom) in November. Please join us as we honor veterans with a very special speaker.

Join November Meeting by Zoom:
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83622483669?pwd=dmdUWlZKQkdQeUJWM0hCSXpOdEE3dz09
Meeting ID: 836 2248 3669
Passcode: 429403

NSARTA has an amazing “village” of hard-working officers and committee members striving to keep you informed and involved in all things TRTA! Have you read THE VOICE? It is loaded with tons of info about our organization as is this newsletter!
Here are some things you need to know...

- 17 NSARTA members attended the **TRTA District 20 Fall Conference** on October 28th in Boerne.
  - TRTA Executive Director Tim Lee reported that....
    - Due to the urging and hard work of TRTA members and staff during the “roller coaster ride” of the legislative session, a 13th check was added to and passed during the special session.
    - Retirees will receive an extra check equal to their annuity up to a maximum of $2400 in January.
      - Speaking in a collective voice makes things happen. Let’s keep growing our voice!
      - **Our Each One Bring One** membership campaign continues through 11/30/2021.
      - Members receive a chance to win $25 gift cards at our December meeting for every new member recruited. **NSARTA membership form is attached.**
    - The work of TRTA shifts for now to Washington D.C. It’s time to fix the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and Government Pension Offset (GPO)! Watch for updates and Calls for ACTION to let our elected officials know we are actively listening and watching for their support!
  - **November is Texas Retired Teachers Foundation Month.** Donations for TRTF will be collected at our meeting or submitted directly to TRTF. NSARTA makes a budgeted donation of $100 every November. *TRTA has distributed $800,500 to educators of the past, present, and future all across Texas since 2008...check out The Voice to find out how!*
  - **Community Service Opportunity~** Elf Louise needs help organizing family information ahead of their annual gift distribution. This is a sit-down activity and an opportunity to meet other NSARTA members. Any amount of time is appreciated. Text or call Peggy at 210.373.3961 if you are available during any of these times:
    - Wed, Nov 17th from 1:00 – 3:00
    - Thurs, Nov 18th 9:00 – 3:00
    - Fri, Nov 19th 9:00 – 3:00
  - **Our NSARTA Holiday Luncheon** returns at our December 15th meeting. To RSVP please submit your $23 check made out to NSARTA to Dolores Ramon, Treasurer by December 3rd.

**THANK YOU!** **THANK YOU** to all that made food and monetary donations to NSARTA’s food drive for Ridgeview Elementary School families. Our fabulous Porch Elves collected donations and will deliver to Ridgeview on Monday, November 15th. Watch Facebook for pictures. Our mighty NSARTA village is definitely **the rainbow in someone else’s cloud.**
BECOME A DIAMOND PLUS MEMBER – THE PREFERRED MEMBERSHIP!

- Once a year: Complete NSARTA Membership Form and submit a $15.00 check for your local NSARTA dues
- One time action: Complete TRTA Membership Form to deduct $2.92 monthly (total $35.00 per year) from either:
  a. TRS Annuity
  b. Personal Bank Draft

By choosing this method, your voice and numbers will be heard by our legislators!

**Diamond Plus Member**
NSARTA dues $15.00  
TRTA dues of $35.00 is drafted  
Payment $15.00  
Check # _______

**Renewal Member**
NSARTA dues $15.00  
TRTA dues $35.00  
Total $50.00 ____  
Check # _______

**New Member**
NSARTA dues $15.00  
TRTA dues $35.00  
Total $50.00 ____  
Check # _______

Name ____________________________  Today’s Date ____________

Complete Address ____________________________  Email ______________

Birthday Month ________________ Phone Number ______________________

School district from which you retired ________________ Retirement year ______

Circle Yes or No: I receive an annuity from a teacher retirement system.

**New Member Recruited by:**_____________

Mail TRTA and NSARTA Membership forms, TRS Form 593 and
check payable to NSARTA for $15 or $50 depending on your membership choice to:

Eddy English

NSARTA First Vice President

13028 Trent Street

San Antonio, Texas 78232
NOVEMBER HEARTS OF NSARTA

Karon Wernli

"Sharon and I are twins born in Cuero, Texas on December 30, 1947 to Pauline and Oscar Wernli. The names on our birth certificates were originally spelled Sharron and Karron. When we started school, we were Sharon and Karon. Sharon was born first with brown hair and brown eyes. I was born after Sharon with blonde fuzzy hair and blue eyes. We had one brother, Paul, who was five years older.

My father’s father and two brothers left Switzerland, landed at Ellis Island, and settled in Kenedy.
My father would sing to us when we rode on the tractor with him. We had the most fun jumping off and on the back of the pickup with our dad watching us and driving slowly.

My father had a heart attack when he was 38 in March of 1954 and passed away. Our mother kept the farm and managed the crops and animals with the help of a person who lived with his family on the farm.
When this person left the farm, my mother leased the farm and started working at a Nursing Home in Kenedy, went to college in Victoria, and later became the Administrator until she retired.

I started first grade in the fall of 1954. I joined the band in the fifth grade and played the clarinet until I graduated. I went to school all 12 years in Kenedy. I knew most of our classmates and families since I was in first grade. Since our brother was a football player, we went to all the games. I watched the majorettes each game and was fascinated by the baton twirling and practiced the routines at home. I became a majorette my Junior and Senior year and was chosen to be the Band Sweetheart my Senior year. I graduated in 1966 and went to college in San Marcos at Southwest Texas State College.

My first job out of high school in 1966 was with EEOC. I worked two summers, 1966 and 1967, for the EEOC Program in Kenedy. Being the youngest, I learned from my experienced co-workers. In the fall of 1966, I started college at Southwest Texas State College in San Marcos. I majored in Education and minored in Biology. I worked my way through college in the Speech Department all four years for Dr. Elton Abernathy, a brilliant professor and chairman of the Speech Department. I typed and proofread two of his books before they were published. This was a lifetime experience for me working with Dr. Abernathy because he was a big influence in my life.

As a freshman in college in the spring of 1967, I entered the Karnes County Beauty Contest. I don’t know why I wanted to do this and I knew I could twirl for my talent. I came in second with a younger girl winning. Because she was too young, I was asked to represent Karnes County in the Miss South Texas
Beauty Contest in the summer of 1967 in Seguin. From this experience, I received an offer from a modeling agency in California to be a model, but I declined the offer and stayed in college. In the spring of 1970, the school districts interviewed graduates at the college. In the summers of 1971 and 1972, I worked at Town Services, a moving van company, doing office work. In the summer of 1970, I got a job in Northside in San Antonio teaching 5th grade at Westwood Terrace. I taught at Westwood Terrace eight years from the fall of 1970 to June 1978. I then moved to Middle School in July of 1978 to June of 1983 to teach 6th graders. In June of 1983, I stopped teaching for two years to work in the public. My first job was with Lares Research, a dental company, as a Sales Rep. I was trained in Detroit to install light sources for the dentists’ drills. In October 1983 the company laid off the dental reps and used catalogs. In October 1983, I was lucky to find a job at Fairchild Aircraft as the Benefit Administrator. I was trained in Washington D.C. to learn the employee benefits. Fairchild decided to close some departments which caused me to be laid off in June 1985. I then got a job for Larry Mazor, a tailor, until July 1985. That was an adventure and a challenge....that was enough for me.

I went back to teaching at Zachry Middle School from August 1985 to December 1990. Another big change in my life was when my mother passed away in the summer of 1986. Still grieving, I decided to get my Counseling Degree at Our Lady of the Lake. I was still teaching at Zachry and going to school at night. I received my Master of Education in School Counseling September 1990. I left Zachry in December 1990 and became a counselor at John Glenn Elementary. In 1991, still at John Glenn, I decided I wanted to be an Administrator. So, I went back to Our Lady of the Lake and received my Mid-Management Administrator’s Degree in December 1994. I was at John Glenn from December 1990 to July 1994. For a chance to be closer to home, I moved to Leon Valley Elementary in July 1994 as Counselor. After being a counselor, I wanted to start interviewing for an Administrator’s job to help teachers with the behavior of students. I became the Vice Principal at Leon Valley in July 1999-2006 and ended my career as the Vice Principal at Adams Hill Elementary from July 2006 until I retired. I was in education for 43 years as a Teacher, Counselor, and Vice Principal.

Another big change in my life was when my brother passed away 8 years ago. Sharon and I still have the farm and take care of the land and house and do go to the farm to keep things going.

Lanny, my significant other, and I have traveled through many states together. Since he was from North Carolina, we visit his family every year. We’ve taken trips to New Mexico, Colorado, Niagara Falls in Canada, South Dakota, Maryland, the Rio Grande River and took a Caribbean Cruise. On July 20th we went to Kansas to get my third Silky Terrier.

A surprising thing about me is when I was a young girl, I ran through the corn fields like a free spirit, picked cotton, pulled corn, drove a tractor, and taught myself to twirl. I also rode barrels down a hill with my cousins to see who could stay in the longest. We had so much fun on the farm as young kids. I have had so many great memories, experiences, and challenges in my life.”
Sharon Wernli

“I was raised on a farm in Kenedy, Texas. We lived in a wood frame house until our new stucco house was built when we were 5 years old. My father died in 1954 of a heart attack at 38 years of age. My mother continued to manage the farm with a hired family who lived on the property. When the drought hit, my mother went to work at a nursing home. She took care of patients and sometimes worked double shifts, which left her 3 children alone for period of time in the evenings, but our brother was old enough to care for us. She started going to college in Victoria to be the Administrator of the nursing home. She went back and forth from Kenedy to Victoria and did become the Administrator of the Nursing Home until she retired at age 72.

I attended schools in Kenedy, Texas and graduated in 1966. I began playing the clarinet when I was in the fifth grade and eventually sat in the lead chair in high school. At UIL competition, I played a solo as part of the total band composition and was very proud that I had accomplished so much. I also loved volleyball and played on the girls’ team. I served in several class offices in high school and was voted “Wittiest” girl my senior year. I loved writing and was sent to a Journalism workshop at Trinity University during the summer of my Junior year in high school so that I could publish the high school paper.

I attended Southwest Texas State College beginning in 1966 and majored in Science. I later changed my major to Education with a minor in Health and Home Economics. My freshman year at SWT, I worked in the Education Department grading ACT tests. I worked as a secretary and grader in the Geography Department for the following 3 years on the college campus. I enjoyed dormitory living the first three years of college and really enjoyed apartment living my senior year when I roomed with 3 other girls. I had tremendous fun in college with friends, many who became life-long. During college summers, I worked as a waitress and cook at a Dairy Queen. Smelling like onions was a dreaded experience.

I began teaching third grade in San Antonio in 1970 at John Glenn Elementary in the Northside District. I married at age 23 to a friend of my apartment roommate but the marriage failed and I divorced. During teaching summer breaks, I worked at Towne Services in the bookkeeping department finding the bookkeeper’s mistakes! I also worked at night at a steak house as a cocktail waitress and at a kiosk in North Star Mall over the Christmas period. I left John Glenn after 16 years to obtain my master’s degree in School Psychology at Trinity University. I was assigned many troubled students during my 16 years at John Glenn Elementary School and developed an interest in psychology because I wanted to understand these students and help more of these dear children.

My Master’s Degree in Psychology enabled me to get a job at Vance Jackson Middle School in Northeast teaching students with emotional and disciplinary challenges. I had a teacher’s aide to help with the discipline and teaching. I taught at Vance Jackson for two years and left to become a School Psychologist in Northeast District. I tested students in elementary, middle school, and high school and served in schools at all levels. I also did group counseling with psychiatric interns and school counselors while employed in special education.

When I retired, I spent more time at the farm in Kenedy with my brother working on the farm. My brother passed away eight years ago. Karon and I still manage and maintain the farm.
I am a member of the State Association of Texas Pioneers and have held offices in the organization. During Fiesta, I help with decorating a carriage for the Fiesta Parade. I was nominated Honorary Lady Chairman of the Year in 2000 and also rode in the Fiesta Parade. I was honored at a Pioneer Ball during Fiesta that year. I am also a member of the Daughters of the Republic of Texas.

I am an avid reader and love to read the San Antonio Newspaper every day. I also work on crossword puzzles and have been doing crossword puzzles for years. I find them very relaxing. I also do a lot of gardening in the yard and like spending time outside.”

PROGRAM  Barbara Rothe  210-380-8150  barbrothe@sbcglobal.net

NOVEMBER 2021- Beautiful fall weather is upon us! Hats off to our tech folks who were able to pull off our October hybrid meeting without a hitch! Impressive! Thank you Adele, Peggy, Michele and Carolyn P. We will again meet in person and be on Zoom in November. You will receive the Zoom ID and passcode from Peggy by email a few days before Wednesday, November 17th if you choose to attend by Zoom.

Our October program focused on Wellness and Healthy Living. Our speaker, Loren Kaplen, H-E-B nutritional specialist was awesome. We all learned so much…eating or drinking protein to keep our muscles in tip top shape is just one take-away for me. A generous gift of several samples was a special treat for our members and an added bonus. Who doesn’t love our H-E-B?

We tapped into our creative side by painting “sayings”, “flowers”, “Halloween ghost, goblins or mummies” and many other creative designs on small rocks. Michele Bibb was instrumental in organizing, buying and preparing the rock activity. She painted the base color and glazed each and every rock! Thank you Mich! There is nothing like being together with laughter and smiles. Everyone had a great time!

Our November program will focus on our Veterans who have served our country. How proud and honored we are to remember our brave men and women who have risen to the call to continue to keep our country free. We have a very special guest speaker, Candy Martin, Ambassador At-Large, retired Army chief warrant officer of 38-years. Candy is a Gold Star mother who will share her story. I believe we are in for a special treat and I cannot wait to meet her! Please join us on Wednesday, November 17th at 10:00 am. Stay safe and healthy.
BIG READ BOOK CLUB  Patti Evans  paevans2808@aol.com

Our Big Read Book Club met earlier this month at the home of Diana Sarfin and discussed the book The Rose Code by Kate Quinn. We will meet again on January 5th at 1:30 to discuss our latest selection The Last Thing He Told Me by Laura Dave. I’ve heard good things about this book, so I can’t wait to start reading this one. I’m sure it will bring some lively discussion at our next gathering in January.

We invite anyone who would like to join our group just contact Patti Evans paevans2808@aol.com or Peggy Peterson and we will get you on The Big Read Book Club email list.

Meet- Ups for Members  Kathy Cooke  210-573-0501  kjccooke@yahoo.com

December and Christmas are right around the corner and with that comes our NSARTA Meet-Up Cookie Exchange. The cookie exchange will take place on Tuesday, December 14th from 11:30 until 1:30. We will meet for lunch at Rosario’s on San Pedro and follow that with an exchange of cookies for the upcoming holidays. A big thank you to Debbie Moulton for finding a place for us to meet.

There will be a sign up at the November NSARTA meeting or you can call or text Kathy Cooke or email her to be included. Several members have already signed up at our October meeting. Details on what to bring and how to package your cookies, will be forthcoming by email, once you have signed up. This will be fun and participants will have a nice variety of Christmas goodies to enjoy!

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

As of November 9th, we have 121 memberships turned in plus lifetime memberships. Congratulations to Peggy Peterson, Steve Guerrant, Linda Nolder & Dolores Ramon for recruiting new members. And our awesome president has recruited 4! We are still missing at least 50 who were listed in last year’s yearbook. Hoping for more to trickle in before the 13th, at which time I will be submitting my report for the month.

TREASURER’S REPORT  Dolores Ramon  210-386-4533  Dolores.ramon@yahoo.com
31638 Catalina Way, Bulverde, TX 78163

Greetings and Happy Thanksgiving!

NSARTA members are the best! As you know, we have been collecting food donations as well as monetary donations for the needy families of our adopted school, Ridgeview Elementary. Because of your generosity, we have collected over $700! Thank you again for your generosity. We are also planning and collecting for our NSARTA Christmas Luncheon on December 15. If you’re not able to attend our November meeting, and you would like to join us for the luncheon, you can mail your $23 for the luncheon to me. Make checks payable to NSARTA.

Question #1: Which of our Heart twins was born first?
NSARTA Minutes—Regular Meeting
North San Antonio Retired Teachers Association
In-Person at San Pedro Presbyterian Church & Via ZOOM
WEDNESDAY, October 20, 2021

1. President Peggy Peterson called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM. She welcomed everyone.
   A few reminders about the meeting today—those on ZOOM can use the Chat button on their devices to participate today.
2. Invocation was given by Barbara Yates (Chaplain); Pledges to the Flags were given by members of the hospitality committee.
3. 1st Program: Barb Rothe (2nd V-P) welcomed and introduced our speaker, Lorena Kaplen, RDN, LDN, HEB Registered Dietician to speak on “Living a Healthy Life”.
4. 2nd Program: Michele Bibb (Corresponding Secretary) presented an art project using rocks, which can be used as a paper weight.
5. 37 participants were present today.
6. Officer Reports:
   a. Minutes from September 15, 2021 were approved and filed. Carolyn Pfeiffer, recording secretary, had these minutes previously printed in the October newsletter.
   b. Treasurer’s report, by Dolores Ramon, was reviewed, approved, and filed for audit.
   c. Michele Bibb sent out several get well cards in October to NSARTA members. She also thanked members of the hospitality committee for calling 4 times since the membership drive began to remind members about payment of dues and recruitment of new members.
   d. Eddy English (1st V-P) gave a membership report, with a total of 210 members update, plus 17 life members.
   e. Peggy reminded members of the Each One Bring One Campaign just for NSARTA to recruit new members, by October 31. Drawings for two $25 gift cards will take place on November 1 for a new member and the new member recruiter selected.
   f. Barb Rothe mentioned the program for November will be “Honoring Veterans”.
   g. Adele Murphy (Legislative Chair) reminded everyone about Election Day on Tuesday, November 2.
   h. Sherlyn Valentin (Children’s Book Project Chair) thanked Carlos Ortiz and Pat Loewe for their book donations.
   i. Paul Cwiklik (Immediate Past President) reported on voting of a new slate of officers for 2022-2024 in February.
7. Announcements:
   a. Elf Louise sign-ups for volunteering in November is available.
   b. Christmas Cookie Exchange sign-ups for December is available.
   c. NSARTA Christmas Luncheon on December 15 will be $23.00. Pay Dolores Ramon by December 3 for this luncheon catered by Heavenly Gourmet.
8. Door Prizes were given out.
9. Next meeting will be Wednesday, November 17, 2021, at San Pedro Presbyterian Church.
10. Adjournment: 11:54 AM.

*Notes taken by: Sue Sim on Oct. 20, 2021*
A sympathy card was sent to Patti Evans for the passing of her sister. Please keep her family in your prayers. Thank you for informing me of members who have lost family members or members who simply need a warm greeting from us. Praying for a safe and healthy Thanksgiving season for us all.

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

Election Day has come and gone: thank you to those who voted. I’m sharing this important update from Richard Herbst, TRTA Region 20 Legislative Chair.

**Rep. Brady Files HR 5834 Proposing WEP Reform, Action Alert Included!**

*TRTA is calling on our entire Texas congressional delegation to support HR 5834, the Equal Treatment of Public Servants Act of 2021*

**TRTA members, please click here** to send an urgent email action alert to your Representative today!

I want to encourage you to encourage your Congressional Representative in Washington, DC to support HR 5834, the Equal Treatment of Public Servants Act of 2021. The easiest means is to go to The Inside Line from Tim Lee and click on the link to email your representative. I will attach the Representatives for District 20 and this will include address and phone number. The Inside Line explains TRTA’s position in relation to both reform bills for WEP. We feel we need to get all of the Texas Representatives to get signed on to encourage the House and Ways Committee to move forward with some action.

Thanks for your support and involvement. This is a great opportunity for some change to the WEP, so let's give it our best.

Richard Herbst

TRTA District 20 Leg. Chair

**US Representative Dist. 35 Lloyd Doggett - D**

2307 Rayburn House Office Building  Wash. DC 20515  202-225-4865

217 W. Travis St.,  SA 78205  210-704-1080

**US Representative Dist. 21 Chip Roy - R**

1319 Longworth HOB  Wash, DC 20515  202-225-4236

5900 Southwest Pkway Bldg 2 Ste. 201a  512-871-5959

1100 NE Loop 410 Ste 640  SA 78029  210-821-5024

125 Lehmann Dr. Ste 201  Kerrville 78028  830-896-0154

**US Representative Dist. 20 Joaquin Castro - D**

2241 Rayburn House  Wash. DC 20515  202-225-1915

727 E. Cesar Chavez Blvd. Ste B128  SA 78206  210-348-8216

**US Representative Dist. 23 Tony Gonzales - R**

1009 Longworth House Office Building  Washington, DC 20515  202-225-4511

**US Representative Dist. 28 Henry Cuellar - D**

615 E. Houston St.  Ste. 563  SA, Tx. 78205  210-271-2851

2372 Rayburn HOB  Wash. DC 20515  202-225-1640
TRTF News

November is TRTF, Texas Retired Teachers Foundation, Month. Please consider making a donation to this worthy cause. You may bring cash or a check to our meeting on the 17th or donate online at trtf.org.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Birthdays
Linda Nolder 210-219-4749 lnolder@aol.com Michele Bibb (210) 494-8197


Each month, one birthday name will be drawn at our meeting for a gift card.

HOSPITALITY

Co-chairs Linda Nolder (210) 219-4749 Michele Bibb (210) 494-8197

Due to covid protocol restrictions, our refreshments for the October meeting were all prepackaged snacks (nuts, chips, pretzels, candy) and boxed coffee from Dunkin' Doughnuts. Thank you to Peggy Peterson and Linda Nolder for picking them up for us. Hopefully in the near future, we will be enjoying delicious refreshments provided by our members. As in past years, members will be asked to volunteer to bring treats for these future meetings.

VOLUNTEERING

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

We are into November; that means less than two months to collect volunteer hours for this year. Porch Elves and those helping at Elf Eloise, please keep track of those hours. If you help at the food bank or church holiday events, those hours would count as volunteer hours. You can count the time it takes you to get to your volunteer destination and the time to get back home. If you have a question about volunteering, please contact me. I just saw the updated hourly value of your volunteering in the community, $25.43 an hour. You do make an impact when you volunteer.
CHILDREN’S BOOK PROJECT  Sherlyn Valentin, Nancy Dooley, Pat Loewe & Mary Martinez

Sherlyn Valentin at dhrc@airmail.net or 210 365 9185 or Mary Martinez at marymar408@aol.com
A big thank you to Michele Bibb for helping the Children’s Book Project enter a contest, through several Facebook sites, to win $100 to purchase books. The winner will be announced next spring. Thank you also goes to Pat Loewe, Carlos Ortiz, and Mary Ramos for donating books to be given to Ridgeview Elementary and Meadowlands Charter School. If any NSARTA member has books to donate, contact Sherlyn Valentin or Mary Martinez. Please remember that the books must be new or nearly new and have no markings. The Book Project especially needs books in Spanish or about science.

STITCHERY  Ledru Barker ledrubarker@yahoo.com  210-289-3554

We are currently not meeting until further notice.

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

“You reap rich harvests that love has sown.” Amish Proverb

Question #2: What is the hourly value of volunteering in the community?
With Shopping on our mind, the BBB gives some guidelines on fake product reviews:

Most online shoppers read reviews. But how do you know if they are real or fake?

Good reviews are important. Shoppers depend on customer reviews to make the right decisions. They are also a determining factor in rank algorithms and can lead to better visibility and more sales. It’s no surprise that dishonest sellers often post fake reviews.

Ecommerce websites often have tools in place to analyze and remove fake reviews, but as sellers continually find new ways to craft fake reviews and hire thousands of people to post them, getting rid of every fake review quickly is nearly impossible. As a consumer, the key is knowing when to pass on a product by recognizing red flags in phony reviews.

Easy Ways to Recognize Fake Reviews

Look out for generic reviewer profiles. If a reviewer has a very common or generic name, such as John Smith or Jane Doe, you’ve spotted a red flag. Fake reviewers usually post under fake names, sometimes even just a series of letters and numbers, and rarely do they have a profile picture.

Read reviews by customers with verified purchases. Many ecommerce sites add a badge or otherwise indicate if a purchase is verified, meaning the reviewer bought the product on the same site where they wrote the review. Reviews of non-verified purchases are much more likely to be fake.

Examine the quality of product reviews. A good review will briefly explain why or why not the product in question was a good purchase. If you notice a product has several five-star or one-star reviews with just a word or two in the written portion of the review, you may be looking at fake reviews. This is especially true if you notice multiple, similar reviews posted during a short window of time.

Be wary of scene-setting. A study conducted by Cornell university found that truthful reviewers usually include concrete words relating to the product or service they purchased, whereas fake reviewers like to set the scene. They may talk about how “their husband” visited a specific hotel for a “vacation” or “business trip” instead of focusing on the actual hotel experience. This is another fake review red flag.

Check the grammar and spelling. Sometimes sellers outsource their fake reviews to content farms, where people who are not native English speakers write reviews. The result is fake reviews with misspellings and poor grammar. If you read a review out loud and it doesn’t sound natural, it could be a fake.

Find out if the reviewer received a free product. Some ecommerce platforms have programs that pre-release products to customers in exchange for their honest review. One example is Amazon Vine. This kind of program is usually legitimate and can be helpful, but if you notice almost every review of a product comes from someone who received a free product, think twice. It’s also good to take a look at the reviews overall. If the only satisfied customer was the one who received a free product, it may not be worth paying for.

Look at the quantity of reviews. Business Insider warns that if a product only has a few reviews, especially in comparison to similar products, it’s likely the product is less than reliable.

Try a tool for spotting fake reviews. There are third-party tools available to help you weed out fake reviews. Some of them provide a letter grade based on how many fake reviews were spotted, while others eliminate fake reviews to provide consumers with an adjusted star rating. These tools aren’t infallible though, so instead of expecting a black and white answer, use them to assist you in making a purchasing decision.

Report fake reviews. Most platforms allow you to report abuse if you notice a fake review. Doing so can help the platform eliminate fake reviews faster and it can protect your fellow consumers.
REGISTRATION

Pat Loewe  pat@loewes.net  512-775-2537

Please stop at the reservation table before you enter the meeting. There will be a sign-in book and you will be asked to make yourself a name tag.

MEMBER BENEFITS

Sue Sim  210-632-3143  Suzanne2U5@aol.com

Dental and vision plans are in litigation as AMBA has sued TRTA. If you have one of these plans, stay in touch with your AMBA rep. If you do not, contact TRIDENT. Remember you have TRTA Voice membership deals such as lower car rentals, floral purchases, restaurant discounts, etc.

Questions

Betty Moseley  bmoseley@swbell.net  210 219 9881

Embedded within your Newsletter you will find 2 questions. E-mail or text your answer to both these questions to Betty Moseley by the 3rd Tuesday (day before our meeting) each month, and you will have your name placed in a drawing for a Gift card. The winner will be drawn at our meeting each month.

Have a Happy & Blessed Thanksgiving Day!
11 Things Healthy People Do Every Day
As Reported From 'Health Living, today'
by Eric Patterson

1. They Exercise
Starting this list anywhere else would be a mistake. When it comes to ways to improve and maintain your mental health, physical health and overall well-being, exercise is the answer. You don’t have to push yourself hard everyday, but improving your activity level will improve you health.

2. They Eat Well
It turns out the old adage is true; you really are what you eat. If you fill yourself full of sugary drinks or carbohydrate-rich foods, your blood sugar is going to spike and plunge. This pattern creates changes in mood, irritability and anxiety.

3. They Get Enough Rest
Sometimes the best solutions to get healthy are the most obvious. People with good health regularly get the amount of rest that is right for them. Some people need 10 hours of sleep while other people need less. The important thing is to find the level that makes sense for you.

4. They Practice Good Hygiene
Showering, brushing your teeth, doing your hair and putting on clean clothes every day may not sound very significant, but good self-care plays a factor in being healthy. Caring for your body is a crucial element in staying physically healthy while its role in mental health is equally notable. Good hygiene is a vital way to improve self-esteem.

5. They Complete Goals
Does your life have purpose and direction? Do you set out to achieve and accomplish things daily? Chances are good that healthy people spend their time working towards something they deem valuable. Completing a major project at work, mowing the grass or winning the Nobel Prize all carry worth. Accomplishing goals allows you to feel like a powerful, successful person. This perceived control over life builds good emotional health.

6. They Spend Time With People They Care About
People who are cut off from others tend to develop poor coping skills. These skills almost always lead to poorer health. Instead of isolation, plan events and activities with the people you love the most. This will improve your social health by allowing you to feel like you belong and have a sense of connectedness. Online relationships are fine, but lack the immediacy and reality of a face-to-face connection. Healthy people can be outgoing when needed to make a new friend.

7. They Find Gratitude in the World Around Them
Healthy people do well to make the best of what they experience. In a world full of options, it is too easy to become stuck on the unwanted or undesirable aspects of your environment. When you become stuck, though, you begin to see the world in a more negative light. This light extends to include the people and things that make up the world. Healthy people find gratitude and acceptance by focusing on the positives they come across. They actually look for the good on a daily basis.

8. They Pay Attention
In this case, you are paying attention to yourself. Many people see each day as a series of events that lead them back to where they started: bed. These people are trying to survive the day and block out their own thoughts and feelings. This avoidance ends with unhappiness and poor health. Healthy people pay attention to their thoughts, feelings and behaviors in a process called self-monitoring. This attention is a way to gather information about their experience.

9. They Have Routine and Spontaneity
Healthy people tend to have some type of regularity to their life. They have consistencies and routines that are completed on a daily basis. These tendencies assist both mental and physical health by allowing their body to know what to expect.

10. They Balance Selfishness and Selflessness
Healthy people take care of themselves. Whether it is through self-care, exercise, diet or sleep, it takes substantial time to be healthy. What healthy people are really good at is the balance between selfishness of caring for themselves and the selflessness of caring for others. Volunteering your time and energies towards others feels good and benefits so many others. Sometimes, people try so hard to improve themselves that it becomes an ego-centric endeavor. Giving back and doing for others may yield the healthy results you are attempting to achieve.

11. They Have Leisure Time
If you want to feel your best mentally and physically, you must find enjoyment in the way you spend time. To be clear, leisure time rarely involves spending hours horizontally in front of the TV. Leisure time involves setting out to engage in hobbies, interests and other worthwhile pursuits. Having a creative outlet like art or music will permit you to express your emotions in a beneficial way. Playing a sport or joining a club with allow you the opportunity to socialize with other like-minded people.
OR CURRENT RESIDENT

NOVEMBER 2021

HAPPY THANKSGIVING!