



# El Paso Retired Teachers Association

# GRAPEVINE

May 2019 - Volume 5 - Issue 8



## President's Message

This year, our local unit donated \$1150 to the TRTA Foundation in the name of Nancy Wall a long time member who has, over the years, donated countless hours of work. Thank you Nancy for all that you have done.

As we end this year, the Board has begun planning for next year. Planning and coordinating our luncheons is a major part of that planning. As always, the Board is requesting input on our guest speakers. If you know of anyone that you feel our members would be interested in, please let us know by contacting 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Debra King or any of the other Board members. We do our best to get quality speakers but it is often difficult to get the people requested.

For the first time ever, two TRTA Foundation grants were awarded to teachers in the El Paso area. See the article below for more.

If you have not renewed your membership, now is the time. A membership form is included on page 4. Prompt renewal helps us to plan for the future. It's also time to recruit new members. The most effective way to do that is to ask them to join us.

As we prepare for next year, we are always looking for people to join us in providing information to our members, providing free books for school children, helping organize our lunches, and assisting as a board member. We currently have a vacancy for a Member Benefits Chair and for vice-chairs on most committees. Let me know if you can help.

While you are traveling this summer, please buy a small souvenir and donate it at our first luncheon to be used as a door prize at subsequent luncheons.

James Lamonica, [jphlamonica@hotmail.com](mailto:jphlamonica@hotmail.com)

## IMPORTANT DATES

May 12	Mother's Day
May. 15	EPRTA Luncheon
May. 23	Last day of school in EPISD
May 27	Memorial Day
May 30	Board Meeting
Aug. 12	First day of School in EPISD 2019/2020 year
Aug. 29	EPRTA Board Meeting
Sep. 2	Labor Day
Sep. 18	EPRTA Luncheon
Sep. 26	EPRTA Board

## OUR MAY MINI PROJECT

Our project this month is drink can pull tabs for the Ronald McDonald House. Please bag them up and bring them in.



## TRTA FOUNDATION RECIPIENTS

EPRTA had two winners of the TRTA Foundation Classroom Assistance Grants. This year the TRTA Foundation received 173 grant requests and thirty teachers were chosen statewide to receive the \$500 awards. EPRTA President James Lamonica presented the grants to the two El Paso recipients and their school Principals. Below are the names of the two winners and the purposes of their grants. We wish them well and hope that the money will help to improve their programs.

**Megan Skipworth**, a librarian at Captain John L. Chapin High School in El Paso, will host a ComiCon-style event to promote literacy. The event will include STEM activities, crafts, board games and a trading card tournament. She will purchase high interest comic books and graphic novels to give to students at the event.

**Jenni Pilant-Rey** works at Fannin Elementary in El Paso and helps conduct a biweekly after school enrichment program that uses Wonder Workshop Dash robots to teach students how to code. With the funds, she will be able to purchase three more robots.

## THE BOOK TABLE

If you have read a good book or two and want to share, bring them with you to our next luncheon. We are also sharing children's books so if you have any that your grandchildren have outgrown, others can use them. Thanks.



### EPRTA LUNCHEON

Date & Time: May 15, 2019 @ 12:00 Noon  
 Location: Wyndham Airport Hotel  
 Program: Awards and Memorial Services  
 Menu Entrée: Caribbean Chicken  
 Cost: \$18.00  
 Reservation  
 Deadline: May 7, 2019  
**Call Lila Murphy at 253-5792**



#### Luncheon Reservations

The Wyndham requires that reservations be turned in on the Thursday before the Luncheon. The reservation deadline is listed above. If you are not contacted for the meeting, please call Lila Murphy at 253-5792 by the reservation deadline. If you make a reservation for the Luncheon, cannot attend, and cannot cancel by the deadline, you will be responsible for the cost of the meals reserved. Please pay the Treasurer, Carlos Martinez.

#### Meal Choice Information

For each Luncheon, two (2) meals will be available.

Those will be:

The regular meal published in this newsletter.

A veggie plate that will also be gluten-free and dairy-free. There is no guarantee that the salad or dessert will meet dietary needs.

Please tell your caller if you wish the veggie plate when you make your reservations.

The Calling Committee calls members each month, asking if they would like a reservation for the upcoming Luncheon. If you are **not** being called each month and **would like to have your name added to our calling list**, please contact Lila Murphy, 253-5792, with your name and preferred phone number.

### In Memorium

Gary Gray

### Thinking of You

Dolene Woncjar

### EPRTA LEADERSHIP

President:	<a href="#">James Lamonica</a>
1 <sup>st</sup> Vice President:	Donnette Vollmer
2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice President:	Debra King
Treasurer:	Carlos Martinez
Secretary:	Beverley Mueller

The following members serve as committee chairs.

Book Project:	Anna Marie Tolland
Community Service:	Barbara Keily
Communication:	Gloria Banister
Courtesy:	Page Morgan
Foundation:	Hank Dunbar
Healthy Living:	Beverly Baldwin
Immediate Past President:	Pat Lally
Legislative & Mem. Benefits:	Joe Barbe
Parliamentarian:	Jackie Morgan-Tomko
Protective Services:	Yolanda Barbe
Retirement Seminar:	Ruth Frith
Technology & Phone Tree:	Lila Murphy

## BRING A FRIEND TO MAY'S LUNCHEON.

## LEGISLATIVE NEWS

I know that you've heard it before, but I have to say again that as of this writing in late April, 2019, I have no earth shattering news out of the Texas Legislature to share with you. The Legislature is pondering how to deal with property taxes and a myriad of other big issues (and some little ones, too). That is not to say that nothing is happening for retired educators...in fact, a lot is happening. The problem is that it is all going on behind the scenes, and as of now no official action has yet been taken to formalize the benefits sought by TRTA for the retired teachers of our state. The proposals which we've previously talked about, such as improving the financial status of TRS and its health insurance, and providing increased financial benefits for retirees, are still very much in play and at this point seem to be probable. Exactly how probable and to what extent are still unknown, but do seem promising.

One thing for which I must congratulate you is the response you've made to TRTA's requests for contacting legislators and letting them know how we feel. Those contacts are very important and set the stage for how the legislators feel about pending bills and how they will vote when the time comes. Please continue to keep yourselves informed about what is happening in the Legislature and about when we need to take action in contacting our legislators. If you subscribe to Tim Lee's [Inside Line](#) (and I encourage you to do so), you will be on the cutting edge of knowing what is happening and when to take action. If you don't subscribe, you can still read the information and take action by following the links on the TRTA website [ <https://trta.org/> ] or on the EPRTA website [ <http://localunits.org/elaborate/> ]. KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK ! I also want to remind you that you need to open your Tim Lee emails. They contain valuable information and updates on the Legislative process.

*Joe Barbe—Legislative Chairman*



### Healthy Living: A Sample Beverage Plan

Your body would be perfectly content if you drank nothing but water. You get all the fluid you need and you would get all your nutrients from food. With so many choices available, most people drink a variety of beverages. Here is a plan for beverage intake.

- ⇒ At least half of your daily fluid should come from water. A person needs 12 cups of fluid a day, so that means 6 cups of water. You could drink 100% of your daily needs in water.
- ⇒ About one-third, (or 3 to 4 cups), can come from unsweetened coffee or tea. If you flavor your coffee with a lot of sugar, cream, or whole milk, then drinking less would help, manage your weight.
- ⇒ Low-fat milk can make up another 20 percent, or about 2 cups. Less is fine but make sure you get your calcium from another source.
- ⇒ A small glass, (about half a cup), of 100% fruit juice, or no more than 1 to 2 alcoholic drinks for men or no more than 1 for women.
- ⇒ Ideally, zero "diet" drinks with artificial sweeteners, but up to 1 or 2 glasses, (8 to 16 ounces) a day is acceptable. The Beverage Guidance Panel's original recommendation was 32 ounces a day.
- ⇒ Ideally, zero drinks sweetened with sugar or high-fructose corn syrup, but up to a maximum of 8 ounces.

<http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/healthy-drinks/healthy-drinks-full-story/index.html#guidelines>

**Beverly Baldwin—Healthy Living Chairperson**

# Now is the time to renew your membership

## EL PASO RETIRED TEACHERS ASSOCIATION TEXAS RETIRED TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Membership Form for: **July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020**

Make your check payable to EPRTA (Your check will include your payment to TRTA.)

Date \_\_\_\_\_ **PLEASE PRINT**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip(9-digits) \_\_\_\_\_ Tel. \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_ Prefer newsletter to be emailed: Yes No

Dues \_\_\_\_\_ 35.00 + \_\_\_\_\_ 10.00 = \$45.

TRTA Local Association

I have TRS Payroll deduction \_\_\_\_\_ (Attach Form TRS 593)

I am local life \_\_\_\_\_ I am State Life \_\_\_\_\_

I am a Current Monthly member \_\_\_\_\_

Total enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ CASH \_\_\_\_\_ CHECK # \_\_\_\_\_

\*I am a new member \_\_\_\_\_ This is a Renewal \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*Referred by \_\_\_\_\_

Your email address will only be used for official EPRTA business. Providing your email helps us cut costs.

### Mail form to:

**El Paso Retired Teachers**

**PO BOX 973164**

**El Paso, TX 79997-3164**

Please pay 2019-2020 dues promptly to ensure you will appear in our Yearbook and will receive our publications.

## PROTECTIVE SERVICES

Everyone knows your credit history is important to all aspects of your financial life. Everything from mortgage loans, car loans, renting an apartment or house, and even getting a job are affected by ones credit history. The three major credit reporting agencies in the United States are Equifax, Experian, and Trans Union.

For sometime a great deal of misinformation has caused consumers to be confused as to what truly affects their credit score. According to experts at the credit reporting agencies, the following situations can affect your credit score:

- ⇒ Unpaid Bills and Late Payments- Always follow up on old accounts to make sure they are really closed and haven't ended up with a collection agency. Just a small amount owed on an account can be problematic. Make it a point to pay your bills on time. Being chronically late in paying your bills can affect your score. Timeliness of payments accounts for about 35% of your credit score.
- ⇒ Credit Card Debt During Divorce Proceedings- Married couples are 100% jointly responsible for card debt. It is suggested that couples going through divorce proceedings should work with their lenders. If an ex spouse is declared to be responsible for payment of card debt, working with their lenders will help insure that the other ex spouse is no longer held accountable for those debts and their name can be removed from those cards.
- ⇒ Applying For Too Many Credit Cards- Getting too many credit cards in a short period of time can affect your credit score. This gives the impression you are in credit trouble. Resist the urge to open multiple cards by freezing your credit report. It won't cost you anything because it is free. All you have to do is on your computer contact each of the credit reporting agencies and click on the link that mentions a credit or security freeze. A freeze simply promises to guard your credit account as guaranteed by law.

Many urban myths and stories have been circulating for years regarding credit score reports. The following do not affect your credit score:

- \* Unpaid parking or traffic tickets do not affect your score.
- \* Checking your own credit report frequently does not affect your score.
- \* Inquiries from potential employers or insurers does not affect your score.
- \* Unpaid or paid tax liens do not affect your score. These were removed from credit reports about a year ago.

REMEMBER- Your credit score is a reflection of your integrity as a responsible consumer.

*Yoli Barbe—Protective Services Chairperson*

To find out what's happening in El Paso this summer go to:

[http://  
elpaso  
live.com/  
summer](http://elpaso.live.com/summer)



## VOLUNTEERISM THIS SUMMER

Retired teachers contribute thousands of hours annually throughout the State of Texas. If you are interested in donating time, the Annunciation House is urgently seeking additional volunteers to provide hospitality to refugees. For information, see the posting at [annunciationhouse.org/blog/](http://annunciationhouse.org/blog/) or call 545-4509.

## TRTA MEMBER BENEFITS

TRTA has a wide selection of benefit opportunities which come to you as a part of your membership in EPR-TA and its parent organization, the Texas Retired Teachers Association. In the Third Quarter 2018 edition of the TRTA magazine, *The Voice*, which you should have received through the U.S. Postal Service, you can find a full list of member benefits on page 12. The latest edition of *The Voice* (First Quarter 2019) does not have this list. If you would rather browse the list of benefits online at your leisure and get the information on them, go to the TRTA website, click on “**Membership**“, then click on “**Member Benefits**“. That will take you to a page on which you click “**Log in to see your benefits!**” Once logged in, you can see all the Member Benefits information available on the TRTA website. To access Member Benefits online through the TRTA website, you must be a registered user of the website, which is easy to do. When you go to the TRTA website, just follow the simple instructions to register. You will need your member number and will need to choose a password. TRTA Website: <https://trta.org/>

Joe Barbe—Member Benefits Chair

El Paso Retired Teachers Association  
PO BOX 973164  
El Paso, TX 79997

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ORG.  
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## CHECK US OUT ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Website: <http://localunits.org/elpasorta>

Facebook: [https://www.facebook.com/  
EPRTA](https://www.facebook.com/EPRTA)