



VRTA Newsletter

Publication of Virginia Retired Teachers Association
Member, N.R.T.A.—Division of The AARP

Spring, 2011 Edition

A Message From The President



Hello everyone! Spring is finally here with all the warm days and beautiful flowers and all the work to get ready for our Annual Delegate Assembly on May 9 and 10. Your Executive Committee and I have been busy planning, scheduling, calling and sending emails back and forth to ensure that these will be days of fellowship, interesting sessions, and work completed in re-

warding ways that will move our organization forward.

Susan and Weldon Martin have done another wonderful job with this newsletter. I am not going to repeat information that you will read elsewhere, but I want to emphasize a few things that are particularly important to me at this time. One thing is our membership drive in cooperation with the Central Atlantic Insurance Agency. Letters have been sent to most retired educators in the entire state of Virginia. These letters encourage membership on the local, district and state levels, and they inform members about some of our activities and benefits. The Central Atlantic Insurance Agency spent over \$8000, completely at their expense. I believe this effort will bring in numerous new members, and I am truly thankful for the work that was done for us by the insurance agency. Please thank John Jones and the others who are working so hard for us.

It has been a great pleasure to attend various unit and district meetings. My pride in being your president has increased at each meeting. The VRTA is healthy and growing because of its wonderful, hard working members. I hope to visit lots more of you in

the next year and a half that I am honored to serve you. Just call or e-mail me to get the dates on my calendar.

In December I represented the VRTA at an NRTA conference in Chicago. It was designed especially for volunteer leaders from across the USA. The furthest attendee was from Alaska, but the weather in Chicago was even colder than what she had experienced that week at home. I did not realize that many states have a paid director and a paid staff to carry on the business of their association. They still have officers, but their responsibilities are much different from ours. Those folks did not attend the December meeting. I really learned a great deal at the conference. We looked at the various web sites, newsletters, and bylaws. We exchanged ideas and attended sessions led by NRTA experts. Our web site, newsletters and bylaws were very popular with the attendees. In fact, our web master, Jason Winter, has now received requests from several of the other state associations. I was very pleased with how we "stacked up" against the others.

It will be great to fellowship with everyone who attends the Delegate Assembly. I am eager to see all the flags and scrapbooks that will be on display. We want to see those displays at every meeting. You should take them to your local and district meetings as well. Please read the newsletter article about a technology guru. I want to see us move forward to better communication on the entire state level. Also, please go often to the VRTA web site, vrta.net, because we are adding to it all the time. If you would like to see something posted on the web site, just send it to me, and we will place it online. Look for proposed revisions to our bylaws that will be posted around April 8.

I could ramble on and on, but we'll save it for Blackstone. See you there!

Executive Board Appoints New Secretary

The Executive Board of the VRTA is pleased to appoint Dennis Henry as Secretary of the VRTA to fill out the unexpired term of Mary Larson, who has resigned for personal reasons. Dennis is a native of Front Royal, Virginia. He has BS and MED degrees from James Madison University, and he taught in Warren and Fairfax County Schools. Dennis is a lifetime member in the Virginia PTA and was named Who's Who for American Teachers in 1993.

Henry has chaired the local United Way, the Warren County Fair, the Virginia Championship Canoe Races, and a local political party. He has served as President for the Jaycees, PTA, and the Front Royal Little Theatre. He was named Outstanding Young Man of Warren County in 1980.

Henry has served as president-elect and president of the Warren County Retired Teachers and is currently serving as president of District N of the VRTA.

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"We are pleased to report that the VRS Board has approved a COLA of 1.28% that will begin July 1 and appear in our August benefit. We are well aware that currently public pension plans nationwide are under attack and that we must be prepared to counter these attacks. Therefore, the VRS staff will be with us in Blackstone to bring us up to date on our retirement system."

VRTA Update From the Treasurer

By Betty Craft, Treasurer

As previously announced the Internal Revenue Service considers the group exemption letter of VRTA in effect from federal income tax under section 501 (c) 4 of the IRS tax code with participating districts and units, called subordinates, effective as of August 20, 2009. This was the date that the request was submitted and recognized by IRS with written approval received August 10, 2010. Remember the VRTA Group Exemption Number is 5658. This number must be included along with the individual EIN on the IRS tax returns for each district or unit included in the Group Exemption of VRTA. If a district or unit is not included, they may request to be included as a part of the annual group exemption report which is being compiled at this time for 2011. Proper documentation must also be included. No late information will be accepted, because IRS must receive the report on or before April 1, 2011. Taxes must be filed for the fiscal year ending June 30 no later than November 15 of each year. All data is in the IRS computer so there should be no problems when filing your e-postcard this year.

Remember that IRS requires an active EIN number, a Policy Statement signed by two officers and dated when approved, the Constitution/Bylaws signed by two officers and dated when approved or amended, and a budget signed by two officers and dated when approved on file with the treasurer to be continued in the Group Exemption. The Policy Statement and budgets with signatures and dates were not required in the original application letter submitted in 2009.

In addition to the above documents submitted to the treasurer for the IRS, these organizational documents along with the minutes signed and dated should be on file with each district and unit included in the Group Exemption. The IRS indicates that at any time they could request these documents for review.

The Board of Directors approved that each district or unit pay \$18.00 to help cover the costs of the Group Exemption for VRTA. If you have not paid your fee, please send it to the treasurer. This fee is also due for new additions to the Group Exemption.

There still seems to be confusion as to why VRTA submitted the application for a group exemption letter. As previously stated the Pension Act of 2006 requires that non-profit, charitable organizations that do not file a required information tax form for three consecutive years automatically lose their Federal tax exempt status as a non-profit, charitable organization. This requirement has been in effect since the beginning of 2007. Any income received between the revocation date and renewed exemption may be taxable or a penalty may be assessed by IRS. If each district or unit had to apply for their own tax exemption letter it would be quite expensive. The old fee was \$300.00 and it was increased in 2010. VRTA paid \$900.00 to include all districts and units in the Umbrella Group Exemption. I hope that this information has cleared up some confusion.

Celebrating 75 Years



I hope you enjoyed our 75th Anniversary Celebration as much as I enjoyed preparing it. If there is a particular item which you would like to have, please let me know, and I shall send it to you as soon as possible. I will bring the completed, laminated VRTA Anniversary Collage for your viewing to Blackstone in May.

In the meantime, if you have any suggestions for our 80th Anniversary Celebration, let me know that, too.

Rosa Davis Overby
Historian
804-834-2996

Wanted! Technology Guru

If you are a VRTA member who loves your computer, the Internet, Facebook, Twitter and social networking, I want you to help us move further into the age of technology. We are going to create technology committees on the state, district and local levels. These folks will work to enable us to communicate in a way that will benefit all of our members. They will keep everyone "in the know" about what is going on and what needs to be done. We need a leader in technology who will work with me, future VRTA presidents, our Web Master and others to implement this new initiative. Not all of our members are computer savvy, but we can bring needed information to and from them in an almost effortless way. Please contact me if you are interested in this new committee position.

Helen Tippie, VRTA President
htippie@comcast.net

Report From the Legislative Committee

By Bea Morris, Legislative Chairman

The 2011 General Assembly session ended February 27, one day after the scheduled closing, having dealt with over 2,000 bills. We were disappointed that the health credit benefit for retired school support personnel was defeated again in the House of Delegates, but our gratitude is extended to Senator David Marsden, patron of the bill, and others who worked for its successful passage in the Senate. We were relieved that a number of bills that offered an optional defined contribution retirement plan were defeated. However, this legislation was received more favorably than in previous years and will be an issue of great concern next year. The tuition tax credit and 65% solution bills passed in the House but were defeated in the Senate. They also will return next year.

VRTA members across the state are to be commended for their work before and during the session. Some met as individuals or in small groups with legislators. Others held forums that educated their senators and delegates as well as their members. Some attended and even spoke at the budget hearings held across the state in January. Many lobbied by e-mail, letter, or telephone a number of times during the session. We give special thanks to Bonnie Atwood, VRTA lobbyist, for her diligence in keeping us well informed and for representing us well during the session.

We are pleased to report that the VRS Board has approved a COLA of 1.28% that will begin July 1 and will appear in our August benefit. We are well aware that currently public pension plans nationwide

are under attack and that we must be prepared to counter these attacks. Therefore, the VRS staff will be with us in Blackstone to bring us up to date on our retirement system.

Indications are that the 2012 GA session will be a difficult one. Therefore, it is imperative that all districts be represented at the Legislative Workshop in Blackstone on Monday, May 9, to get information and to learn how they and their units will fit into a plan of action. More members are realizing that it is important not just to be familiar with the issues but to understand them and have the facts and techniques that lead to successful lobbying. We must do long-range planning.

There are a number of things to consider. We should know the redistricting plan by the end of April. All 140 legislators will be up for re-election in November. VRTA does not recommend candidates; however, units and districts may inform **all** candidates of our positions and invite the responses of **all**. Waiting until the October Blackstone meeting to begin this planning is too late.

Teachers are by nature positive, persistent, persevering, and prepared. Join us in Blackstone as we uplift each other, share our skills and ideas, and organize for a successful 2012.

Newsletter Distribution Survey

In order to better serve our members, we are exploring the possibility of emailing newsletters to those members who would prefer it. Below you will find a brief survey. Please take the time to fill it out and mail it to:

Helen Tippie
14 Berkley Court
Troutville, VA 24175

Name _____

I wish to continue receiving the newsletter by mail. _____

I can access the newsletter through the VRTA website. _____

I would prefer to have the newsletter e-mailed to me. _____

My e-mail address--_____

Please notify us of any address changes.

In order to update our records, we need to know if an active or life member has not been receiving the newsletter. If you are aware of this, you may also let Helen Tippie know.

Thank you,

The Executive Board of VRTA

News from Around the Commonwealth

District B Holds Fall Luncheon Meeting

District B held its luncheon meeting at The Chesapeake in Newport News, Virginia, on November 9, 2010. Two representatives from the Special Forces Division of the Newport News Police Department attended the meeting. Lieutenant Eric Mansfield spoke about home and personal safety. He reminded the members that crimes occur when the criminal has the opportunity, the desire and the ability. He provided numerous examples of steps seniors can take to protect themselves: do not carry your Medicare card (it reveals your Social Security number); do not leave ladders and tools in the yard which could be used to enter your home; do not carry numerous credit cards; be careful how you carry your pocketbook and do not leave it in your shopping cart, etc.



Pictured left to right are Sergeant Xavier Falero, Lieutenant Eric Mansfield, President-Elect and Program Chair Martha Bradley, and District B President Janice Mort.

Mrs. Alma Landis, District B Remembrance Chair, (pictured) conducted the memorial service which honored the careers of the 15 District B members who have died in the past year.



District N Holds Christmas Social

On December 11, 2010, District N held its first Christmas Social at the historic Wayside Inn Restaurant and Theatre located in Middletown, Virginia. The inn is the oldest continuously operated inn in the United States. According to Linda Brosgol, President of Rappahannock and social chairperson of District N, fifty members attended the luncheon and a musical version of "The Christmas Carol." All nine units in the district were represented. District N plans a Potomac Luncheon Cruise in June 2011. Bon Voyage!



District P Holds Legislative Forum at Fall Meeting

District P held its fall meeting on October 25, 2010, at the Pomegranate Restaurant in Troutville, Virginia. About 60 members attended the meeting. The program for the meeting was a legislative forum attended by Virginia Senator Ralph Smith and Delegate Bill Cleaveland. They discussed issues that would be addressed in the Virginia Delegate Assembly during the legislative session beginning in January. Many issues, many dealing with the Virginia Retirement System, were addressed during the question and answer time.



Senator Ralph Smith (R-Botetourt) and Del. Bill Cleaveland (R-Botetourt) speak to Dist. P members.

Visit the newly revamped
VRTA website at
www.vrta.org

District D Quarterly Meeting Held at St. Paul's College

District D held its quarterly meeting on January 10, 2011, at the Thomasson Student Center of St. Paul's College. The Greenville Retired Teachers Association was named the Most Outstanding Unit. The unit has been very active in community service projects with 2,142 volunteer hours for 2010. Service hours included volunteering at the hospital, the public library, on church boards, and auxiliaries. Members visited nursing homes and transported people to doctor's appointments and to the grocery store.

President, Reverend George Pugh, Sr., received the Most Active Member award at the Delegate Assembly in October 2010. His application book titled, "Lyrics of a Life," told of his career in education, community service and his ministry. The Greenville Retired Teachers Association received a blue ribbon for its scrapbook for the second year in a row. The theme of the scrapbook was "Spreading the Magic." Sylvia Chambers presented Reverend Pugh and the unit with these awards at the VRTA fall meeting.



State Community Service Chair, Sylvia Chambers presents the Most Outstanding Unit Award to GRTA. Accepting, from the left are Genell Smith, Sarah Seaborne, Ella Pugh, Rev. McKinley Tucker, Sr. (Vice-President), Sylvia Chambers, Rev. George Pugh, Sr., (President), Cleo Goodwyn, Carolyn High, and Pat Holland (Secretary).

On January 10, 2011, District D members presented Sylvia C. Chambers with a Recognition Award for her outstanding leadership as District D President 2006-2010.



Botetourt Retired Educators Have Busy Fall and Winter

The Botetourt County Retired Educators have been very active during the fall and winter. The group collected food for the Botetourt County Food Pantry, school supplies for the Department of Social Services, and used eye glasses for the Lion's Club. In November Sarah and Bill Kohler, retired educators, presented a program about their teaching experiences overseas. They have visited a variety of schools in their travels. In December the group celebrated the holidays with a catered buffet meal and was entertained by the 8th grade chorus from Central Academy Middle School. Plans for the spring include presenting library books to each elementary school in the county, awarding two scholarships to prospective educators, participating in AARP's Drive to End Hunger campaign and a meeting at the Blue Ridge Winery in Eagle Rock, Virginia.



Over 50 BRE members enjoyed a festive holiday luncheon meeting in December.

Roanoke County Retired Teachers Association Sets Membership Growth as Primary Goal

Encouraging membership growth in our chapter has been a primary goal for us and it is paying off with a significant growth for 2010-11. Increased participation in activities has occurred as well. Twelve members attended the Fall District P meeting where General Assembly members were hosted. Community service projects so far completed this year included collecting twenty or so bags of school supplies for needy Roanoke County students at our September meeting. At our November meeting we collected several hundred cans of "Soup for Seniors."

Improving communication regarding important legislative issues has proved to be successful. With the help of Bea Morris, legislative chair of the VRTA, legislative updates were sent to our members to help them to be informed. This communication resulted in scores of emails, letters and telephone calls to state legislators during the 2011 General Assembly session.

Craig County Retired Teachers Provide Christmas Gifts for Needy Family

The Craig County Retired Teachers met for a pot luck luncheon on December 7, 2010. Members enjoyed many delicious varieties of home cooked foods. Nineteen members were present at the meeting. New members were introduced. The program began with prayer by Panco Cantley, and the business meeting was led by Opal Caldwell. A collection was taken to provide Christmas gifts for children in a family. Jo Ann Duncan told interesting stories of the season. Christmas carols were sung with Marie Dobyns at the piano and Craig Starre leading the singing. The celebration was enjoyed by all those attending.

Phyllis Eastridge Represents VRTA at National Meeting

NRTA Community Outreach and Service Meeting Held in Chicago, December 13-16, 2010

Phyllis Eastridge, President of Patrick County Retired Teachers and VRTA Community Service co-chair, represented VRTA at the NRTA Community Outreach and Service Meeting held at the Renaissance O'Hare Hotel and Conference Center in Chicago, December 13-16, 2010. Thirty-three states and the District of Columbia were represented. Rebecca Villarreal, NRTA: AARP's Educator Community organized the event and led many of the sessions.

The first session was an orientation "Cafe' Con Leche": Community Conversations led by Carmenza Millan, Association State Director for AARP Illinois. Following sessions were Finding the Right Volunteer: The position Description, Designing Projects for Busy Members, Writing a Winning NRTA With Our Youth! Award Entry, Communicating Volunteer Opportunities and Celebrating Successes, Finding Volunteer Leaders and Caring Enough to Confront Challenging Leaders, Staying Energized, and Plans for Sharing with Units and Chapters.

The activities were created for community service leaders

and were filled with ideas and resources to share with REA's state and local volunteer leaders. The goal was to make a positive difference for community service leaders and their associations. One quote used to describe retired teacher volunteers was "Blessed are the flexible, for they shall not get bent out of shape."



Can you find Phyllis in the picture? (Second from the right in row 2.)

UNIT SCRAPBOOKS & BANNERS

Units members, please begin preparing your Scrapbooks For Display at the October 3-4, 2011 VRTA Fall Meeting at VUMAC. Contents will include the calendar year July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2011. Your scrapbook is your Unit History! There are NO Guidelines required, just compile your unit history of each meeting and other pertinent data/pictures. The easiest way is to prepare the pages after each unit/quarterly meeting rather than wait til end of the calendar year. Scrapbooks are to be on display by 12 noon Monday, October 3, 2011, until 4 p.m. for certification. However, it would be nice to have them on display until lunch on Tuesday, October 4, 2011. VRTA Awards Chair Canzata Turner will present certificates to the president of each district on Monday night, October 3, who will then distribute to each unit president at the appropriate time for distribution thereafter. Districts who have all unit scrapbooks on display will receive a certificate also. Note: Scrapbooks will no longer be For Judging, just For Display.



Banners on display at Fall, 2010 Delegate Assembly in Blackstone.

Unit Banners are to be displayed by 12 noon until 4 p.m. on May 9 AND October 3 for certification. Again, it would be nice to have the banners on display until lunch on Tuesday, May 10 AND October 4. Districts are encouraged to also display a district banner. Districts that have all unit banners on display will receive a certificate. Districts who have displayed ALL unit banners at the Fall AND Spring VRTA meetings for 2010-2011 calendar year will be awarded certificates. VRTA Awards Chair Canzata Turner will present certificates to units and districts displaying a banner at the same time scrapbook certificates are presented.

All unit certificates should be displayed in unit scrapbook in the following calendar year, July 1, 2011-June 30, 2012, for future viewing and maintaining unit history. Questions or further information, contact Sylvia Chambers at her email address: chamberssc@yahoo.com.

Attention Districts and Local Units!!!

Don't forget to bring your banners and scrapbooks for display at the Spring Assembly in Blackstone.

VRTA Newsletter is published twice annually, in the spring and fall. Submit articles to Co-Editors Weldon and Susan Martin at 1049 Martins Lane, Fincastle, VA 24090 or email at wlmartin@ntelos.net

Lobby Day for Retired Teachers in Richmond

VRTA unit members went to Lobby Day with AARP, as well as attended Older Virginians Day with Crater District Area Agency on Aging, at the General Assembly in Richmond; we met in the sanctuary of St. Paul's Episcopal Church, a building across the street from the General Assembly. These groups met on the grounds of the Capitol for several reasons, too. They still have Lobby Day (?) there every year, I think.

In January 1996, VRTA was invited to participate with AARP in Lobby Day at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Richmond. Wearing red apples, VRTA members could be identified as teachers. We separated from the other group, ate lunch, and visited our legislators before returning home.

That year during the session, the House and Senate passed a joint resolution led by Del. Tom Jackson (upon our President's asking) making January 31 Retired Teachers' Day in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

In January 1997, VRTA had its first Lobby Day. President Ruth Andrews presented plaques of appreciation to Del. Tom Jackson, Del. Lacy Putney, and Sen. Vince McCallahan at St. Paul's Episcopal Church for their support of retired teachers. VRTA officers were introduced from the floor of the General Assembly that year, after leaving St. Paul's Episcopal Church.

In January 1998, VRTA planned a big gathering at the Library of Virginia but the snowy weather cancelled it. Our President Ruth Andrews could not get out of her driveway. We had lots of food and drinks for the few members who were able to get there.

Until 2003, VRTA had Lobby Day in Richmond at St. Paul's, wherein members came and met in the big conference room and/or another smaller room of the church, had programs with our legislators there and gave recognition to many of them. Governor Warner even popped in on one of those days. After our program, we ate lunch and then we visited our legislators in their offices, (if we had appointments) before going home.

We no longer had Lobby Day after President Jonathan Bell's term, according to him. Nelson Taylor, our legislative chair, said that our Lobby Day was ineffective and we needed to do more on the local level. Other problems, such as the weather, attendance (commitment), and funding were issues.

Our Lobby Day met our goal to become visible to our legislators; they now recognize VRTA as a strong group and have asked our opinions on educational issues on many occasions.

On January 31, 2012, we are going to have an electronic Lobby Day. At that time we plan to flood legislative e-mail, Facebook, and web sites with messages about our issues. You will hear more about this effort in the Fall Newsletter and at the fall conference at Blackstone.

Rosa Davis Overby, Historian

804-834-2996 rdoverby@netzero.net



Anniversary cake was enjoyed by all in attendance at the Fall Assembly.



Rosa Davis Overby, 75th Anniversary chairman unveils the 75th anniversary poster at the Fall Assembly.



Past presidents from left, Kennon Bland, Mary Lou Trimble, Rosa Davis Overby and Jonathan Bell flank current president Helen Tippie at the celebration.

Directions to VUMAC at Blackstone

From the North:

I-95 South to I-85 South at Petersburg
Take I-85 South to Route 460 West to Blackstone
Take first Blackstone exit (Business 460) Main Street
Follow Main Street into town, go through 5 traffic lights
Take right on Fourth Street to VUMAC

From the East:

Route 460 West to Blackstone
Take first Blackstone exit (Business 460) Main Street
Follow Main Street into town, go through 5 traffic lights
Take right on Fourth Street to VUMAC

From the South:

I-85 to South Hill Exit 15
Route 138 North to Kenbridge
Right turn at traffic light
Route 40 into Blackstone on Main Street
Follow Main Street into town to Fourth Street
Left on Fourth Street to VUMAC

From the West:

Route 460 East to Nottoway Exit (Business 460)
Route 460 Business into Blackstone on Church Street
Right at College Avenue to VUMAC

VRTA Spring Meeting-May 9 and 10 at Blackstone's VUMAC

The VRTA Spring Delegate Assembly will meet on May 9 and 10 at the Virginia United Methodist Church Assembly Center in Blackstone, Virginia. The meeting is an opportunity for retired educators from across the state to become reacquainted with old friends and to meet new ones. The Board of Directors will meet on Monday, May 9, at 9:30 AM. During the afternoon there will be many interesting and informative sessions from which to choose. At the evening session Madeline MacNeil will entertain.

On Tuesday the Delegate Assembly will meet. Sharon

Smith will deliver the keynote address. Smith is a Senior Program Analyst with NRTA: AARP's Educator Community, and she is a founding staff member of NRTA's *With Our Youth* program. Her remarks will be an interesting way to end the spring meeting.

If you are planning to attend the VRTA Spring Delegate Assembly in May, there is registration form in this newsletter and one posted on the VRTA website. The deadline for registration is April 18, 2011. Hope to see many of you in Blackstone.

Sharon Smith, NRTA Official to Present Keynote Address



On Tuesday, May 10, Sharon Smith will present the keynote address at the Spring VRTA Delegate Assembly. Smith is a Senior Program Analyst with NRTA: AARP's Educator Community. For fourteen years, Sharon has been based at AARP's national office in Washington, D.C. She serves as the NRTA liaison for the SE and SW Regions and works with retired educator association (REA) leaders and AARP state offices with a focus on relationship-building and collaboration.

Sharon frequently leads workshops and acts as a keynote speaker at State Retired Educator Association conventions across the country. She offers strategic counsel to REA state and local leaders, particularly related to leadership, membership, and strengthening institutional capacity. Sharon was also a founding staff member of NRTA's *With Our Youth* program.

Sharon brings hands-on classroom experience from her years teaching first grade in the public school systems of Ohio and Florida. Prior to AARP, she coordinated patient services for a nationwide home health care agency. She has two adult children, two grandchildren and lives in Northern Virginia.

Who is a delegate?

Voting members of the Delegate Assembly shall be members of the Executive Committee, district presidents, unit presidents, and two delegates from each local unit. If a unit has over 100 members, it shall have an additional delegate for each 50 members or fraction thereof.

Folk Singer Madeline MacNeil to Perform on Monday Evening

Members of VRTA attending the Delegate Assembly this spring will be entertained the evening of May 9th by Madeline MacNeil. Before beginning her folk singing journey, she taught in Warren County for six years.

Arts centers and universities throughout the United States have presented Madeline MacNeil in concert. Across the Atlantic, she has performed at the O'Carolan Festival in Keadue, County Roscommon, Ireland; the Glasgow Festival of the Arts in Scotland; and for the Nonsuch Dulcimer Gathering in East Norton, Leicestershire, England. For several years she was a touring artist under the sponsorship of the Virginia Commission for the Arts.

In 2005 Madeline was recognized as a Content Consultant for an exhibit of dulcimers and their scheitholt ancestors at the Museum of the Shenandoah Valley in Winchester, Virginia. She performed background vocals for a national Public Television two-part documentary film, *To Our Credit*. In 2006 Muhammad Yunus and the Grameen Bank, featured in *To Our Credit*, won the Nobel Peace Prize for their efforts in creating economic and social development to help impoverished countries gain democracy and human rights.

She is a best-selling author of mountain and hammered dulcimer books for Mel Bay Publications and has recorded numerous CDs through the years.

SAVE THE DATES!

AARP's next statewide food drive will be on September 9 and 10. Last year 22 units collected 5,000 pounds of food. Can we do even better this year? Watch your mailbox for more information. If you'd like to get news about the drive in advance, send your email address to Pam Caldwell, pcaldwell@aarp.org.

Pam Caldwell
Associate State Director, Community Outreach
AARP Virginia

VRTA Annual Delegate Assembly

May 9-10, 2011

Virginia United Methodist Assembly Center

707 Fourth Street, Blackstone, VA 23824

Phone – 434-292-5308

Monday 8:45 am – 11:45 am – Registration
9:30 am – Board of Directors
1:00pm – Workshop Sessions
7:00pm – Evening Events

Tuesday 8:45 am - Last Pickup of Registration Packets
9:15 am – Delegate Assembly meeting and Keynote Message

NOTE: Registration fees and lodging rates and are per person, not per room or per couple.

Registration postmarked by April 18, 2011 \$25.00

(Registration postmarked after April 18, 2011 -- \$35.00)

Lodging: One night – per person 46.00

Two nights- per person 92.00

Total for Registration and Lodging \$ _____

Room assignments will be made based on the registration postmark. Later registrants may have to share a bathroom with an adjoining room.

Meals: Please indicate your choices with an X.

Monday

_____ Breakfast – 8:00 am \$7.00

_____ Lunch – 12:00 Noon 8.00

_____ Supper – 5:00pm 9.00

Tuesday

_____ Breakfast – 8:00 am 7.00

_____ Lunch – 12 Noon 8.00

Total for Meals \$ _____

Total of enclosed check to VRTA (For total add Registration fee, Lodging and Meals) \$ _____

Mail completed registration form and check, payable to VRTA, **no later than April 18, 2011**. Send to: Weldon Martin, 1049 Martins Lane, Fincastle, VA 24090
Phone: 540-473-2636 E-mail: wlmartin@ntelos.net

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE _____ E-MAIL _____

EMERGENCY CONTACT – NAME _____ PHONE _____

NAME OF LOCAL UNIT _____ DISTRICT _____

ROOMMATE REQUEST _____

ROOM PREFERENCE _____ (Will be honored, if possible, as forms are received.)

SUNDAY ARRIVAL TIME (if applicable) _____. (**May register any time after 4:30 pm**)

DIETARY RESTRICTIONS (List on back if necessary.) _____

ARE YOU A VOTING DELEGATE? YES NO

(PLEASE – Fill out one of these forms for each person attending.)

VRTA
Helen Tippie, President
14 Berkley Court
Troutville, VA 24175

STD PRSRT
U. S POSTAGE
PAID
Permit No. 38
Daleville, VA

Return Service Requested

A Quick Peek at Presentations for Spring Assembly 2011

We have exciting and informative presentations planned for Monday, May 9 at the Annual Spring Delegate Assembly. Here is a quick peek at some of them.

Bea Morris and Bonnie Atwood will lead the Legislative workshop. You will learn all about what happened in this year's General Assembly, what bills were passed, how our issues were addressed, about the condition and future of the Virginia Retirement System, about our priorities for the next General Assembly, and much more. This workshop will run from 1:00PM until 3:20PM with a break at 2:00PM. You can attend all or part.

Our Web Master, Jason Winter will present at all three sessions. He is going to teach us about social networking, how to set up a Facebook account, and about how you and your unit can better utilize the Internet to communicate with each other.

Sharon Smith, from the NRTA, is going to team up with Phyllis Eastridge for workshops on Writing a Winning *With Our Youth!* Award Entry. Sharon served on the team who originally designed the *With Our Youth!* program. She has participated as a judge on the selection panel for many years. Many units in Virginia have conducted wonderful programs that would qualify them for awards and recognition, but entries have been incomplete or poorly written. Sharon and Phyllis will have lots of tips on writing "the award winning entry"! There will be samples and handouts to take back to your local unit.

Robert Thomas, III, a retired teacher and longtime Blackstone

resident, will present a history and highlights about Blackstone, how it was founded, and things to do and see in and around the town. He is currently curator of the Carriage Museum and the Swartz Tavern. This presentation will be repeated at all three sessions.

Jim Bradford and Joe Egyed will present "Leadership Tips" during the 3:30-4:30PM session. They have tried and true ideas and methods about leadership on the local, district and state level. This is a great workshop for current and prospective officers and committee chairpersons. Joe is District F President and Jim is the VRTA President Elect.

Rosa Davis Overby will give a presentation during the 1:00-2:00PM session. Her title is "The Power of Laughter". She will help you discover the power of laughter according to Joel Osteen and Rosa. You won't want to miss this session by one of our most entertaining and hard working members.

Betty Craft will conduct a question and answer workshop about the duties and responsibilities for local and district treasurers. She will also report on the IRS Umbrella and answer questions about that. Every unit should try to send someone to this important session.

Central Atlantic Insurance Agency will hold three sessions about various types of benefits and insurance. This is the time to ask questions and to learn about the many benefits they provide for the VRTA.

Several other workshops will be held, but at the time of this printing, the details had not been finalized.