



VRTA Newsletter

Publication of Virginia Retired Teachers Association

Member, NRTA—Division of The AARP

Spring 2019 Edition

A Message from the VRTA President



Tomorrow, March 1, 2019, is the beginning of meteorological spring. Here in Fauquier County we are expecting between 1-3 inches of snow and probably a school delay. I must confess, the phrase “school delay” does not excite me the way it did when I was still in the classroom. For my wife and myself, it just means early morning babysitting the grandkids and to make sure they get on the bus and get to school on time.

Glenn Pair, Sr. and I have been working on the program for the upcoming VRTA Spring Delegate Assembly in earnest for the past several weeks. I want to publicly thank Glenn for his work to make this Spring Delegate Assembly the best yet.

Delegate Assembly the best yet.

Hopefully as you look over the newsletter, you will see that we have several brand-new breakout sessions this year. It is our hope that you will be intrigued by the topics and make it a point to attend the delegate assembly. According to our bylaws, each unit is entitled to send two voting delegates. If you have more than 100 members, you may send a 3rd voting delegate. For every 50 members over 100, you are entitled to send another voting delegate. Please let your unit be well represented. It is important that your voice be heard, and you have voice in the decision-making process of the VRTA. Remember our **Mission Statement; “To be the voice, resource and connection for all retired school personnel.”** Let your voting delegates be the voice of your local unit!

The DoubleTree has worked very closely with me and there are refurbishments in the décor, the elevators and the HVAC system. Hopefully, we won’t be too hot and suddenly too cold. Everything will be on one level, registration, luncheon, breakouts, etc. If you examine closely the registration form, the room rate is very reasonable. It is \$106 per night plus taxes. You can have up to 4 people in your room. You cannot beat the price. *The DoubleTree has also allowed the rate for 3 nights prior to the delegate assembly and 3 nights after the delegate assembly.* Why not take advantage of all the sights Richmond has to offer in the spring? My wife and I are going to spend an extra day and go to the museums and beautiful parks in the city. I ask that each person fill out a registration form. It will make the registrar’s life a lot easier. Bring a guest to the luncheon. They just have to pay for lunch and then maybe they want to go and explore the Richmond environs and meet you back at the hotel in time for dinner.

What’s new this spring, you ask? Besides a list of new breakout sessions, we are going to have a **Marketplace** set up in the James River Corridor. Any unit or district who wishes to sell/raffle items for scholarship can man a table and display their wares. Fauquier Retired Teachers Association is going to have a silent auction. They are going to have afghans, scarves, potholders, a wine basket, and a gift certificate for a free night at the DoubleTree. If you would like to get in on the Marketplace, email me at bhmccart@gmail.com and let me know, asap, so that I can secure an additional table for you. VRTA is still going to give away 10 Walmart gift cards for those delegates attending the breakout sessions. Just think, you could win more than once! We will still have the 50/50, with proceeds going to one of 6 VRTA philanthropic choices. I am personally going to write a check for \$50 to a delegate who spends at least one night at the hotel. Bring your playing cards, board games or listen to me drone on with my hard trivia questions during the evening on Tuesday. I will have prizes for the trivia winner.

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Visit VRTA’s Website at VRTA.org

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President's Message continued

One final word; I would hope that Vice-President Reba Evans will have a great group in her breakout session on membership. I have asked her to try and get your thoughts on a statewide information sharing session in late May, by having all unit and district leaders craft a letter to the local media, during the same week, on who we are and what we do. I am working on a generic poster which could be used by all the local units identifying us and having space to write down local meeting times and places for each unit. Remember, **"We enrich retired school personnel's lives."** That is our VRTA Brand!

I am going to end my letter with our **VRTA Vision Statement; "All retired school personnel, will be safe, productive, informed and financially secure in retirement."** It is my heartfelt wish that the 2019 VRTA Spring Delegate Assembly will meet all your needs. Please join us on April 29 through May 1. You will come away with valuable information to share in your local units.

Ben McCartney, VRTA President

The 2019 Award News

Listening or reading the Award Report is exciting. To know you are a part of it is exhilarating. Many units and districts are a part of the report. **CONGRATULATIONS!** If you are not a part, resolve to be in 2019. A summary of the 2018 Report follows:

Reports:

52 units reported by June 30, 2018
 12 units reported after June 30, 2018
 64 total units reported
 2 districts reported by the deadline
 66 Grand Total
 11 early bird reports (first 10 to report)
 9 districts with 100% units reported by the deadline

Banners:

12 units displayed banners Fall 2017 and Spring 2018
 5 districts had 100% unit banners displayed
 8 districts banners displayed Fall 2017 and Spring 2018

Scholarships:

\$82,800 given in scholarships by 24 units
 \$13,000 given in scholarships by 13 units
 \$10,350 given in scholarships by 22 units
 \$2,500 given in scholarships by 5 districts
 \$108,650 total given in scholarships
 11 districts with 100% scholarship participation

Membership:

16 units with equalized membership in the unit, district, and state
 One district with 100% equalized membership in the unit, district, and state

Other:

25 special awards were given.
 Districts receiving the most awards: D-37, N-21, P-16, E-14, I-14
 218 awards given – October 2, 2018

Thanks to all who participated, and we strongly encourage ALL to be involved in the future.

Canzata B. Turner, Awards Chairman

Virginia Retired Teachers Association

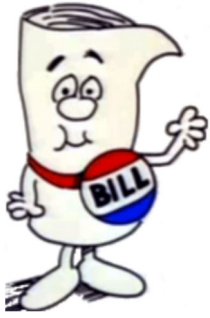
"Organized November 28, 1936"

2018- 2020 Officers

President—Ben McCartney	(540)347-9516 bhmccart@gmail.com
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Treasurer—Weldon Martin	(540)473-2636 hooman4949@gmail.com
Immediate Past President Nina McClanahan	(276)935-5004 mcclanahannina@gmail.com

Fall 2019 Newsletter

The deadline for the fall newsletter is Wednesday, August 21, 2019. Submit articles and pictures to Susan Martin at:
 susanmartin730@gmail.com
 or at:
 1049 Martins Lane
 Fincastle, VA 24090



The Story of a Bill

Bonnie Atwood

Virginia General Assembly Session 2019 was a memorable one. Yes, the Old Dominion was in the national spotlight, and not in a good way. Nuff said about that. But the silver lining is that business carried on, as it has for 400 years. Citizen legislators came to town; they introduced bills of all kinds that they believed would help us all. Some were approved; some not. Some dangled on the fence for a while before they evaporated, perhaps never to be seen again, or, more likely, to come back prettier or uglier next year. Whatever you can say about watching the sausage factory, it's not dull.

My adventure with one bill was particularly illustrative. Names are withheld to protect the innocent, as Sgt. Friday used to say. Like other bills, it was a bill that meant well. It was a bill that would give more freedom to the average guy. It was a bill that would keep the government out of our private business. It was a bill that would make people happy, save them money, and save them red tape. That's a great thing, right? Well, maybe not. To quote another TV personality, Dr. Phil, "no matter how flat you make a pancake, it still has two sides." The other side of this bill was that it involved public safety. Sometimes safety costs a little money. And sometimes safety necessitates a little red tape. That, in a nutshell, is what lots of legislation is about.

I noticed this bill a little late in the process. After all, a short session goes like a game of "Beat the Clock." When I did stare at the bill, I was concerned, and I went to speak to the patron. That is always the first step. Speak to the patron, the legislator who introduced the bill. Sometimes he or she is referred to as its sponsor, and the bill was written in response to a constituent's complaint. When you go to see the sponsor, you give your take on the bill. Sometimes, we hope, the legislator understands your point of view, and suggests a "friendly amendment" that makes the bill pleasing, or at least acceptable, to all parties.

All of this is then discussed in a subcommittee—the place where the bill is broken down in discussion, and everybody, in favor or opposed to the bill, has his say. In this instance, I was late to get in on the discussion. The bill had passed—narrowly—in the subcommittee. I had to work fast. I gathered the other opponents. We wrote talking points. I prepared testimony. Before the committee meeting, I cornered the chairman in the lobby. (That's why we're called lobbyists.)

He graciously agreed to let me speak to the committee. Some chairmen are known for never agreeing to this. They make their own rules. (First Rule: THEY make the rules.) I made my case, and I didn't do too badly. However, the bill passed again, narrowly. It was on its way to the House Floor for three readings.

The first reading is usually just a formality. It puts the bill with others on the agenda. Most of them pass in a "block vote," with no discussion. The second reading is critical. That's when they get into debates. We can watch them, but we can't enter the discussion, unless it's behind the scenes. So that's what we did. We started writing letters, telephoning, emailing, talking to legislative aides, the works. Second reading came up. The bill was discussed briefly, but we were then disappointed. It passed, again on a narrow vote.

Almost everybody gives up at this point. By third reading, the bill is usually a done deal. Legislators vote the way they voted before. They barely listen to the bill again.

But not this time. We called, texted, sent carrier pigeons, and blew smoke signals. Okay, actually, we just called and talked in the hallways and handed out flyers. But it worked. We watched as the bill was pulled out of the block of bills on third reading. It was discussed again. Dare we hope? Score! The bill was voted down, and by a pretty good margin.

Our work was not finished until every single lawmaker who voted against this bill was sent a thank-you note. The takeaway? There are two: (1) Never give up. (2) Get ready to see a similar bill next year.

Teacher Stories

If it's the Lord's will and the creeks don't rise in Patrick County, look for a shortened version of the Teacher Stories coming to the Spring Delegate Assembly meeting. There are still entries to come, editing to be done, clean up, and organizing. Furthermore, this method will allow others to submit essays and articles. The final book will be available at the Fall Conference 2019.



WRAP UP AND WARM UP



I'm sure you're as glad as I am to have finally come through a long cold winter when we did have to wrap up and warm up on many frosty, dreary days. What a wonderful change it is to welcome spring with sunny days and new birth of life we see in the colorful flowers and green leaves on the trees. You're sure to enjoy the drive to the DoubleTree in Midlothian where on April 30-May 1 we're going to wrap up the 2019 General Assembly session and get warmed up for the 2020 session.

I'm delighted that Delegate Betsy Carr will help us to do this at our Legislative Workshop on Tuesday afternoon, April 30. Since 2010, Del. Carr has represented the 68th House District which includes part of the city of Richmond and Chesterfield County. Having been a member of the Richmond Public School Board, she is well aware of the needs of public education, teachers, and students and works to meet those needs as she serves on the Appropriations Committee, the Commission on Employee Retirement Security and Pension Reform, and JLARC, among others. We appreciate so much that she was one of the three on the Appropriations subcommittee on Compensation and Retirement who voted this session against tabling the motion to include all retired school personnel in the health insurance credit.

On Wednesday morning, the VRS staff will be with us to give an update on the retirement system and to answer questions.

As teachers, you know that a class or a session is never truly "wrapped up." The time may elapse, but we carry with us what we have learned and experienced and use those lessons as we enter the next level. What is it that we have to do this summer and fall to be ready for elections in November and the long GA session next January? We can't afford to have the summer slide that we sometimes see in children who never read a book between the closing of school in the spring and the opening of school in the fall. Let's come together on Monday, April 30, with expectation and enthusiasm as we begin our warm up to the 2020 General Assembly Session.

Bea Morris

Membership --Notes from Fall Membership Session 2018



The Membership Sessions at the VRTA Conference was the chance for those who attended to give their thoughts on membership. The attendance at this session had memberships from 10 to 65 members attending their meetings. Units meeting times vary from every month to 4 times a year. We talked about membership, programs, community service and fund raising. The things we discussed are listed in this article.

Reasons membership does not increase are:

- Some people come to the September meeting and do not come again. When asked why, they replied that they do not want to attend meetings.
- Others feel the group is just for teachers and not all school personnel.
- It is for public school teachers only and not open to private school personnel.
- The name is restrictive.
- Do not attend because, after retirement, they are going into other jobs.
- For some the distance and transportation to a meeting is a problem.
- It is too expensive to hold a meeting and too expensive to attend the meeting.
- Having a luncheon meeting leaves some people out who cannot come to a luncheon meeting.

How to get people to attend meeting:

- Have a luncheon or other meal for the first meeting of the year.
- Invite the Clerk of Circuit Court to a meeting to discuss wills, probate and other legal matters interesting to seniors. A lawyer would also be a good speaker on these matters.
- Advertise in newspapers, radio, TV, Internet such as Facebook, emails, etc.
- Have a telephone call list to let people know about the meetings.
- The Police or Sheriff's office will come to do programs on identity theft, frauds or drug problems.
- Have the meetings in a restaurant with a separate room so you can meet in private.
- Send out a newsletter before the first meeting with a list of programs for the year and meeting places.

Membership article continued on page 5

Membership, continued

Suggestions for meeting places were golf clubs, churches, resorts, a member's home, restaurants, schools, and trips. The list is only limited by your imagination.

Other ideas:

- Ask local businesses to offer discounts to those with VRTA membership cards.
- Recruit on TV on a community calendar channel or other local channel.
- Use technology to pay membership dues.
- Have the officers of the VRTA visit the local units and districts whenever possible.
- Send letters to retired school personnel who have not joined. Some school systems will work with you to get information to those in the system who are retiring each year.
- Have a banquet with some of the cost going to scholarship and have a reduced fee for newly retired school personnel. Also, have the scholarship recipient come to the banquet.
- Make a brochure to be placed in the schools about your local retired teacher's unit.

Community Service: Why do units not report their community service hours? It is hard to get community service hours from the members. Suggestions are:

- Collect the hours once a year.
- Put up a sign-in sheet on a table and as they sign-in, collect their community service hours.
- Let them know how much their community hours benefit the community.
- Some want to be recognized for what they do, but most do not. They do the service to help others and not for recognition for themselves. We need to come up with ways to make it important to them to understand what they are doing is service and why it is important to the organization and themselves that it be reported.

Suggested Activities:

Do things outside of the meeting

Vary the programs. Examples for programs are:

- Master Gardner
- 4-H people
- Art walk
- Ask Art Teachers for students work to show at meetings
- Therapy dogs
- Students come and read their writings to the group
- Future Business Leaders
- Future Teachers
- Museums

How to raise funds for Scholarships:

- Silent auction from members donations
- Have a music group come or gospel concert to present a program and charge admission or collect donations.
- Raffle donated items from companies and members.
- Limit applications to deserving seniors.
- Place a basket out at each meeting on a table and collect donations in honor of or memory of someone for your retired teacher's scholarship fund.
- Shoe rally where donations are collected according to shoe size.
- Sell tickets to events and share the profits with your unit's share going to scholarship.
- This year units and districts can do scholarship fundraising at the VRTA meetings.

VRTA MISSION STATEMENT

"TO BE THE VOICE, RESOURCE, AND CONNECTION FOR ALL RETIRED SCHOOL PERSONNEL"

VRTA VISION STATEMENT

"ALL RETIRED SCHOOL PERSONNEL WILL BE SAFE, PRODUCTIVE, INFORMED AND FINANCIALLY SECURE IN RETIREMENT"

VRTA BRAND

"WE ENRICH RETIRED SCHOOL PERSONNEL'S LIVES!"

Newsletter Articles

VRTA wants your news for the newsletters. It would be helpful if articles submitted for publishing would be emailed to the newsletter editor. If an article cannot be emailed, typing the article helps to ensure accuracy. Pictures can be emailed or mailed to the editor. The people that are pictured should have given permission for their pictures to be used in the newsletter. This is especially important if pictures of students are included with the article. Also because of copyright issues, I cannot use pictures taken by a professional photographer. All submitted articles will be used if space permits. Articles received after the deadline will likely not be included. The deadline for the Fall 2019 newsletter is

Wednesday, August 21, 2019.

News From Around the Commonwealth

Lunenburg-Nottoway Retired Teachers

The Lunenburg-Nottoway Retired Teachers Association presented welcome back gift bags to teachers and staff at Lunenburg County Public Schools Opening Convocation. Also, the L-NRTA conducted drawings for gift cards. At Nottoway's Opening Convocation President Anne Stinson with members Linda Johnson and Yvonne Johnson manned the distribution.



Assisting with the distribution of the gift bags are President-Elect Ruby Ingram and Rose Ann Sweetney, member.

The members of the Lunenburg-Nottoway Retired Teachers Association prepared 42 holiday stockings for the students of the Victoria Head Start Program. Students and their families received a stocking filled with a DVD movie, popcorn, Kool Aid and candy to allow them to enjoy a "family movie night."



Pictured left to right: Anne Stinson, Ruby Ingram, Evelyn Staples, Linda Johnson and Patricia Johnson

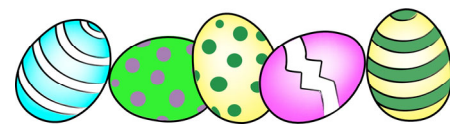
Patrick County Retired Teachers are on a Mission

The Patrick County Retired Teachers Association is on a mission to help local students affected by head lice. For the past three years, the association has raised funds within the community to provide each school in Patrick County with treatment kits to eliminate head lice. These kits are left with the school nurses in each school to distribute to children in need. Therefore, the treatment can start immediately. Children cannot attend school as long as they are infected.

Local businesses, (especially pharmacies), organizations, churches, and individuals are contributing to this mission. There is always a need for more kits, and we appreciate all donations.



Amy Worley (L) Elementary School nurse, receives a case of lice medication from Phyllis Eastridge (R), Patrick Country Retired teacher.



Washington County Retired Teachers

Each October the Washington County Retired Teachers Association donates to our local food bank, Faith in Action. The membership makes donations of food, money and many donate their time as volunteers at the facility. They accept donations from organizations such as ours as well as individuals, places of business and different churches throughout our area.

We find this Christian mission a worthwhile recipient of our yearly donation. Faith in Action offers a food pantry that serves over 800 families per month. They also operate a thrift store and offer gift certificates to families. Not only do they offer these services to those in need but partner with Crossroads Medical Mission. They are very willing to help with many different services in the community. There is a special process required of anyone who has the opportunity to take advantage of this wonderful service. Anyone who receives their help and assistance receives a hand up and not a hand out.

Brad Farmer, Director of Faith in Action, spoke to our group explaining how our donations are used.

Brad Farmer, speaking at the October meeting



Brad Farmer and Judy Hayden, Chair Person of WCRTA's Community Service Committee with donations



News From Around the Commonwealth

Alexandria Retired Teachers

Alexandria Retired Teachers Association (District H) had three ladies from FREED (Female Re-enactors of Distinction from the African Civil War Museum in DC) in February for African History month. Dr. John Schmitz of Northern Virginia Community College spoke at our March meeting about the Japanese, Italian, and German concentration camp in Crystal City, TX. His father was in the camp as a child. In April we had Principal Peter Balas speak about his goals for TC Williams High School. We had our annual May luncheon and heard Delegate David Bulava speak about educational issues in Richmond. On June 6th Barbara McClellen awarded TC William senior, Mikayla Addison our \$2500 scholarship for her at Norfolk State University. She is going to major in Elementary Education.



Scholarship winner Mikayla Addison and Barbara McClellen, president of Alexandria Retired Teachers

Editors note: I apologize to Alexandria Retired Teachers Association for neglecting to put this article in the Fall 2018 Newsletter.

Alexandria RTA Fall 2018 Events

- Elaine Flynn did a living history of the Four Wives of Hemingway in September.
- In October we had AARP do a program on Scams and Fraud.
- In December the Mt. Vernon Heritage Harmony Singers performed seasonal music.

Buchanan County Retired Teachers

Members of the Buchanan County Retired Teachers' Association continue to find new ways to serve the community in which we live. This year two new projects were added. On October 27, 2018, volunteers took part in Buchanan County Public Library's *Haunted Storybook Walk*. BCRTA sponsored an individual storyboard, provided treats and made a donation. The story, *By the Light of the Halloween Moon*, unfolded on storyboards in downtown Grundy. Storytelling, games, prize drawings and balloons were available. The event was open to the public and was for all ages. In December, BCRTA purchased food items for the *Shop with a Cop* event. To encourage underprivileged children to trust and respect police officers, the officers from Buchanan County and the town of Grundy take children shopping for Christmas. This program is funded by donations and special projects.



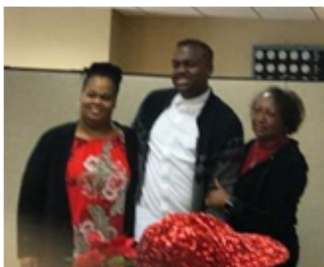
Pictured L-R: Judy Holland, Cindy Matney, Patricia Hogston, Penny Jennell and Nina McClanahan



Richmond-Henrico Retired Teachers

The Richmond-Henrico Retired Teachers (RHRT) began 2018-2019 year wearing pink in recognition of October-Breast Cancer Month. Each member received a packet of information about cancer.

The December luncheon was dedicated to "Youth In Our Community." Members donated school supplies, mittens/gloves and hats to be delivered to eight (8) District Q schools after the Winter Break. We also made our annual monetary donation to the Feed More/Back Pack Program.



Our 2018 W. Roland Galvin Scholarship recipient, Antonio Kornega and his mother were our honored guests. Antonio is attending North Carolina A&T.

On January 31, 2019, the following members represented our unit on VRTA Lobby Day at the General Assembly:

Mary Collins, Ernestine Dockery-Roy, Margaret Smith, and Margaret Wildy. We were able to speak with Del. Lamont Bagby (74th) and Sen. Jennifer McClellan's Legislative Aide, Nicole Hayes (9th). The highlight of this day was the introduction in the House by Del. Jeff Bourne from Richmond and in the Senate by Sen. Glen Sturtevant who represents Powhatan, part of Chesterfield, and Richmond City.



News From Around the Commonwealth

Franklin Southampton Retired Teachers

The fall 2018 community service project for Franklin Southampton Retired Teachers' Association was to assist in replenishing the food pantry for the Thanksgiving holiday for Franklin's Cooperate Ministry. A list was retrieved in order to purchase the most needed non-perishable items. Members made the presentation which was provided by the unit members.



L to R: Mr. Charles Haskins, Mrs. Bessie Smith, Mrs. Cheryl Roberts, Mrs. Carol Logan and Mr. Thomas Smith

Carroll County Retired Teachers

Carroll County Retired Teachers held its November meeting at the Hale Wilkinson Carter Home in Hillsville, Virginia. The meeting was a memorable one with a few members attending the Veterans Day Program at the Carroll County Middle School then moving on to the Hale Wilkinson Carter Home for a business meeting and lunch. Lunch was prepared by the committee that oversees the Hale Wilkinson Carter Home. It is always a special day with an elegant table and delicious meal.



GRTA Men of Distinction

On October 6, Greenville Retired Teachers Association sponsored a Men of Distinction – This is Your Life program and banquet at Royal Baptist Church, honoring ten men who had been or are members of GRTA. These are men who have dedicated their lives with many, many years to educating, mentoring, motivating and being a role model for the children of Greenville/Emporia, surrounding counties in Virginia, and even in North Carolina, South Carolina, and other states.

The honorees were Dr. Frederick D. O. Black, Sr., Dr. Fred Brown, Deacon Bowman K. Burton, Deacon Melvin A. Drew, Deacon Glenn C. Pair, Sr., Rev. George W. Pugh, Sr., Dr. Theodore R. Tillar, and Rev. McKinley R. Tucker, Sr. Deacon Joseph H. L. Russell and Deacon Edward B. Webb, Sr. were honored posthumously. Each honoree present was presented a plaque for their service and dedication.

They have been pioneers in their own rights being the first black to integrate the Greenville County High School as a teacher (Black), the first black male to graduate from GCHS (Pair), the first black assistant superintendent and interim superintendent of Greenville County public schools (Russell), and being chosen the first black principal to lead the integration of Pleasant Grove Union School in Burlington, North Carolina (Burton). Others have been principals (Brown and Pugh), leaders in vocational education (Tucker), leaders in their communities, ministers and pastors of churches, served in the United States Armed Forces, and served in civic positions in their communities. Deacon Webb, Deacon Russell, Rev. Tucker, Rev. Pugh, and Deacon Pair were presidents of GRTA.

The program included: Master of Ceremonies, Deacon Gerard T. Pugh; Scripture, Mr. Riddick Parker, Jr.; Prelude, Opening Selection, and Prayer, Rev. Kelsey Moore; Prayer Chant, Mrs. Elma Brown; Welcome, Mrs. Carolyn High; Presentation of Honorees, President of GRTA Mrs. Genell T. Smith and Deacon Gerard T. Pugh; Tributes to honorees by family and friends, Miss Tiana Black, Ms. Michelle Burton, Mrs. Dora Brown, Ms. Esther Small, Dr. George W. Pugh, Jr., Mr. Alexander Grant, Mrs. Joan Inniss, Mr. McKinley R. Tucker, Jr., and Mrs. Vernita Baskins; musical selections, Mr. James Cooper, and videographer, Mr. Kenneth Speller.

The program concluded with a power point presentation put together by Mr. Clarence Miles, showing the childhood, family, profession, retirement, and community service of the honorees. Closing remarks were given by Mrs. Genell T. Smith, GRTA President, followed by the blessing and benediction. More than one hundred, twenty-five family, friends, and students attended.

Left to right: Deacon Glenn Pair, Deacon Melvin Drew, Rev. George Pugh, Deacon Bowman Burton, Rev. McKinley Tucker, Sr., Dr. Frederick Black

News From Around the Commonwealth

Suffolk Retired Teachers

The Suffolk Retired Teachers Association have had a rewarding year. A few of the community projects undertaken included collecting school supplies for Mack Benn and Elephants Fork Elementary Schools; a food drive for the Salvation Army held at Walmart, sponsored by AARP in which Lakeland High School students along with their advisor and a student from Hertford County High School assisted the members of SRTA: Iness Taylor, Marion Wright, Mary Hicks (chairperson), Virgie Sandifer, Mary Steverson, Costellar Ledbetter, Mary Copeland (President) and Marjorie Bullock (volunteer). A certificate of appreciation was created by Vivian Pruden and presented to the students. Five hundred pounds of food was collected. A \$1000.00 scholarship was presented to Maya Ingram from Nansemond River High School. She will attend Longwood College.

At the fall meeting SRTA received five certificates for early bird reports, banner display, equalized membership, and giving a \$1000.00 scholarship. Mary Copeland and Virgie Sandifer attended the meeting.

Lorita Mayo, a retired elementary principal has been selected to serve on the Suffolk City School Board. Iness Taylor serves as the Relay for Life representative for her church, Tabernacle Christian Church where she is a deacon. At the Martin Luther King, Jr. Unsung Heroes Award Celebration held January 26, 2019, Costellar Ledbetter was chosen for her many years of leadership in the NAACP.

We were saddened by the lost of some of our active members: Priscilla Benn, Elizabeth Christian, Elizabeth Carter, Bertha Crocker, Almeta Smith, Estella Jones, Leon Harris, Ivy Mitchell and Beatrice Reeves.

Our goal is to support our unit and look forward to getting more retirees to join SRTA. We are starting a recruitment project.

Portsmouth Retired Teachers

The Portsmouth Retired Educators Association (PREA) continues providing helpful programs for its members as well as contributing to the community.

Recent guest speakers have included the Clerk of the Court who discussed the importance of having wills and avoiding probate and two Fire Marshalls who distributed pamphlets about fire safety for seniors and discussed services provided at no cost to citizens.

The Portsmouth unit donates food to the AARP, school supplies to Parkview Elementary School, basic supplies to the HER Shelter, and donations to the Salvation Army and others.

Raising money for scholarships is an on-going project.

Officers are Iva Foust, president; Mozelle Parker, vice-president; Judith Morgan, recording secretary; Gracie Bowers, assistant secretary; Howard Foust, treasurer; Bessie Durham, assistant treasurer; Vivian White, financial secretary; Marie Chavis, chaplain; and Rosa Wells Garris, legislative chair.



President Iva Foust with supplies for the HER Shelter

Loudoun County Retired Educators



LREA is very proud of all the volunteer hours its members contribute. In 2018 these LREA members were recognized for their many volunteer hours. Pictured from left- Francie Malone 400+ hours, Jeff Jackson 200+ hours, Ann Thorsen 300+ hours, Ellen Bawiec 300+ hours, Linda Greeley 200+ hours.



Our reliable LREA volunteers who work in the heat and the cold packing food for the Loudoun County Back Pack Buddies, (a student food assist program.) Thanks for your time and your hard work!

News From Around the Commonwealth

Arlington County Retired Teachers Association A New Space and Successful Programs

ARTA moved to a new meeting venue in the fall. Members have enjoyed the new space at the Arlington Community Church and continue to enjoy the monthly socializing during the potluck lunch that begins each meeting.

We closed 2018 with a delightful holiday program presented by Chris Urquiaga, a singer-songwriter and recent Artist in Residence at Strathmore following his graduation from The Eastman School of Music. Chris shared some of his songs and familiar holiday music. At the end of the program our gifts for the residents of Arlington's Mary Marshall Assisted Living Home were delivered. Our generosity required four cars to ferry the gifts!

Our most recent programs have focused on self care. Carol Stehl, a certified yoga instructor visited in February. She shared a history of the discipline and spoke of the transformative and healing physical and mental health effects of yoga. Carol led us in some moves to aid our flexibility and invited us to the seniors-oriented classes at her studio. In March, AARP guest speaker Paul Singh shared "The Five Pillars of Brain Health" presentation with an enthusiastic audience. All of us are now motivated to "take charge of our brain health and improve our quality of life!"

District N Members Attend Fall 2018 VRTA Conference



Dinwiddie County Retired Teachers Association

The DCRTA hosted a breakfast for new teachers on Aug. 20. Members welcomed the new teachers and offered some "words of wisdom". Members collected school supplies over the summer which were donated to Dinwiddie Middle School. Teachers and staff received treats during American Education Week.



Williamsburg-James City County RTA

With the opening of our 2018-2019 season, our Executive Board decided to include low movement exercises at the conclusion of each meeting. For approximately ten minutes we have been led in these activities by one of our members, Linda Fields. This has been additional fun during our gatherings that benefit all of us.

Our group continues to contribute to FISH, an organization that assists local residents. Throughout each season donations have included household goods, canned foods and socks and undergarments for young children. Bed lines, towels and washcloths are also donated.

Scholarship applications from high school seniors are reviewed by our scholarship committee and presented to our group. A \$500 gift was forwarded to Virginia Tech on behalf of the 2018 recipient.

After enjoying lunch in the Richmond area, some of us attended a professional theater performance, "Sister Act," at the Virginia Repertory Theatre on Broad Street. We anxiously wait another performance, "The Wiz," this year.

During our December meeting we welcomed a new member, Ruth Chance. At the conclusion of the meeting, we had a gala of activities. The holiday song, "The Twelve Days of Christmas," was led by Christine Jordan and accompanied by all members portraying various parts of the song. Additional games and amusements were guided by Doris Randall.



Members attending "Sister Act"



Low movement exercises



Members at meeting

News From Around the Commonwealth

Sussex County Retired Teachers

Following VRTA's Motto "To Serve, Not Be Served," Sussex County Retired Teachers strive to be a positive role model in all walks of life throughout their travel and within the community. Specifically, members volunteered and visited schools during open houses, holiday celebrations, school board presentations, PTA/SOL nights and Grandparents Appreciation Week. We are currently excited and looking forward to participating in Read Across America, Dr. Seuss Breakfast Week and career day. Community activities include visiting nursing homes, working at food banks, donating school supplies and books and providing healthy snacks for students.

Members of SCRTS participated and supported Sussex Central High School's second annual Ralph Joyner Classic Basketball Event.

We depend on one another and pray for continued strength as we work together and share our talent.

"Education is not the learning of facts, but the training of the mind to think." Albert Einstein



Registration Table

Job Fair

Jamori Briggs and Ora Briggs



Registration Table
Grandparents Week
Dorothy Williams and
Ora Briggs

Henrico Retired School Personnel Association

The Henrico Retired School Personnel Association held its fall luncheon at the Willow Oakes Country Club on November 1, 2018. All members enjoyed a wonderful time of fellowship and great food. Angela Harper, the 2018 Henrico Christmas Mother, gave members an update about the Christmas Mother Program for 2018. Since it was the philanthropy project for the fall, members were encouraged to donate and volunteer their valuable time. Bruce Adie, VRTA Benefits representative, supplied information and tips on the 2018 Medicare Annual Enrollment Period. Everyone enjoyed a musical presentation by the Miles E. Godwin High School Madrigals under the direction of David Clatterback.



Miles E. Godwin High School Madrigals

David Clatterback, Director



Angela Harper
2018 Henrico
Christmas
Mother

Hanover Retired School Employees Association

The Hanover Retired School Employees Association (HRSEA) – District S met on Thursday, October 18, 2018, at 1:00 P.M. at The Hanover Center for Trades and Technology (THCTT) in the Hanover County Public Schools. A delicious brunch was created and served by the THCTT culinary students. Ms. Rebecca Kritz, from the Virginia Retirement System, was the speaker for the fall meeting and announced that we will see changes in our VRS life insurance provider. The provider's name has changed from Minnesota Life to Securian. However, there are no changes in our retiree benefits. Ms. Kritz suggested that we all use the MyVRS website to view and update vital information located in our retirement plans. Canned goods and monetary donations were collected and given to the Ashland Christian Emergency Services (ACES) Food Bank to be distributed to the Hanover County community.



The 2018–2019 HRSEA officers from left to right are Charla Cordle-secretary, Mike Duke-vice president, Deborah Roane-president, and Judith McKinney-Treasurer.

SPRING DELEGATE ASSEMBLY—WHAT'S NEW

In order to better serve all VRTA members that attend the Spring Delegate Assembly on April 29-May 1, 2019, I am initiating a change for Tuesday morning, April 29. **Beginning at 8:00 AM, coffee and tea will be available in the James River Corridor near the registration table.** The following morning we will have the coffee, tea, water along with assorted muffin trays for you to enjoy.

For those who are not members of the Board of Directors, **information tables will be manned in the corridor during the Board of Directors meeting.** We will have a table manned by VRTA Treasurer, Weldon Martin, who will be able to assist unit and district leaders with their questions and concerns about dues and membership. Creekside Insurance will have a staffed table to answer your questions on Medicare, long-term care, and annuities. We will have a table for the 50/50 raffle, with proceeds going to one of our organized groups designated by the VRTA philanthropic committee. **We are introducing the MarketPlace.** Any unit or district who would like to set up a table and sell/raffle items for local scholarship may do so, as long as they contact me at bhmccart@gmail.com by mid-April, so I may secure a spot in the corridor for each group needing a table. These tables will be manned by the unit or district requesting the table. So far, Fauquier Retired Teachers and Henrico Retired Teachers will be in the MarketPlace. **Fauquier is raffling off several items with the biggest prize, a one night stay at the DoubleTree-Midlothian, free of charge.**

As President of VRTA, I am going to once again draw a room number at random, at the end of the conference and write a **personal check for \$50.00** to the winner, to help offset the expense of the conference. I wrote a check for \$25 at the fall conference and the winner was Weldon Marin, who has yet to cash my check. I will be more than willing to re-issue it, if he misplaced it.

We will still have 10 Walmart gift cards awarded at the end of the business session on Wednesday for those members who attended breakout sessions.

We will still have a game night on Tuesday evening. I love to do trivia questions, but if you would like to bring a board game or cards and play card games, great!

We have six new breakout session topics of interest for everyone. Please examine the topics and plan on attending as many as possible. Finally, Bea Morris is planning another very important legislative breakout session so make sure someone from your unit or district is in attendance for her session. She and Bonnie Atwood, our lobbyist, work long and hard for VRTA.

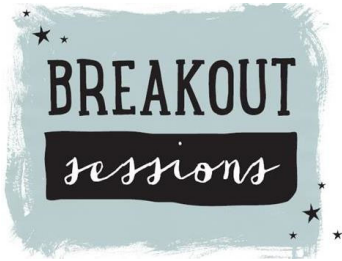
Ben McCartney



Remembering the
Fall 2018
VRTA Meeting

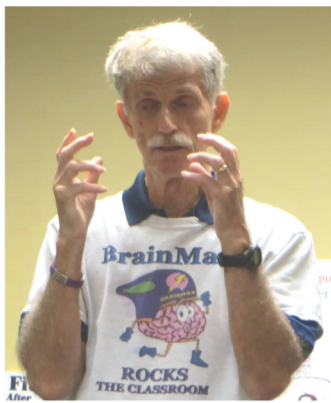


Breakout Sessions at 2019 Delegate Assembly



During the 2019 Delegate Assembly there will be many interesting sessions to choose from on Tuesday afternoon. The following topics will be included:

- **Decluttering and Downsizing**-a new AARP topic
- **Home Fit and Understanding Universal Design**-staying comfortable, independent, and injury-free in our homes
- **Brain Health and Staying Mentally Sharp**-improving brain health
- **Understanding Reverse Mortgages**-pros and cons to consider
- **Scams, Cyber-scams and Being Proactive**-protecting yourself from being a victim
- **Greater Richmond Age Wave**-benefits for retirees in the Commonwealth
- **VRTA Benefits**-medical coverage, long-term care, and financial security
- **Membership**-increasing membership in VRTA
- **Legislative Workshop**-preparing for the upcoming general election in the fall
- **By-laws and Rules Changes**-discuss suggestions for operational changes in VRTA



Break-out Sessions Fall 2018



DOUBLETREE BY HILTON RICHMOND-MIDLOTHIAN
1021 KOGER CENTER BOULEVARD*RICHMONT, VA 23235
804-379-3800
DIRECTIONS

From Washington D.C. Traveling I-95 South—Take Exit 79 (Powhite Parkway—195) Keep to left and follow Powhite to Midlothian Turnpike (Route 60—West). Follow Midlothian Turnpike 2 miles to Koger Center Boulevard. Take right to hotel.

From North Carolina Traveling I-95 North—Take Exit 67 (Chippenham Parkway). Follow 10 miles to (Route 60) Midlothian Turnpike West. Five miles to Koger Center Boulevard. Take right to hotel.

From Charlottesville—Traveling I-64 East—Take exit for Route 288—Will be on the right—Just before the I-295 Exit. Stay of Rt. 288 across the James River. Second exit after the river crossing will be Midlothian Turnpike (Route 60). Take exit east. Travel approximately four miles. You will see the Chesterfield Town Center Mall. Go two additional blocks. Be in far left hand lane and turn at traffic light onto Koger Center Boulevard. Take right to hotel.

From Virginia Beach and Richmond International Airport—Take I-64 West. Follow signs to I-95. Do not take I-295N. Stay on I-95 North to Powhite Parkway (195, Exit 79). Follow Powhite Parkway to Midlothian Turnpike (Route 60-West) for 2 miles to Koger Center Boulevard. Take right to hotel.

The DoubleTree by Hilton Richmond-Midlothian is located 22 miles from the airport and 11 miles from Downtown Richmond. Powhite Parkway is also listed as Route 76, south of the James River. Powhite Parkway is a toll road. First toll after crossing the James River is \$0.70 and the second toll at Midlothian Turnpike is \$0.25.

State President of AARP to Deliver Keynote



Carol Downs, State President of AARP Virginia, will be the keynote speaker at the VRTA Delegate Assembly in Richmond. She will speak on a mixture of legislative issues that AARP Virginia is advocating, as well as what is newsworthy on the program side.

Since graduating in 1995 with a master's degree in social work (concentration in gerontology) from Catholic University of America, Carol has been involved in issues that impact the lives of seniors and their families. Her professional life has included working as a Program Specialist for AARP, Washington, D.C; Director of Patient Services for the American Cancer Society, Vienna, VA; Program Specialist for the National Association of State Units on Aging (NASUA) and most recently as Executive Director of the Shepherd's Center of Oakton-Vienna (SCOV) in Vienna, VA.

Since retiring in 2008, Carol has volunteered for AARP Virginia as a Community Outreach Volunteer, an advocate on the State Legislative Team and is currently serving as the State President. Carol has been a member of the Alexandria Commission on Aging (COA) for the past 10 years, including being the Chair of the Commission for two years. She has also been Chair of the virtual village, At Home in Alexandria (AHA), and a member of the Northern Virginia Aging Network (NVAN), an organization that focuses on State legislative issues that impact seniors.

Prior to working in aging issues, Carol worked for 3M Company for several years in sales and marketing. She started her professional life as an elementary school teacher in Connecticut and California.

To maintain a sense of balance and levity, Carol enjoys being with her nine grandchildren, working in the garden and traveling to places she's never been.

Her motto is, "If you're not having fun, don't do it."

"Time for 2" to Entertain



"Time for 2" will perform at the VRTA Spring Delegate Assembly during the luncheon on Tuesday. Kearston Gonzales started her musical education at the age of three with the Suzuki Violin Method. Kearston is the first-place winner of the 2018 Hampton Roads Philharmonic Concerto Competition and 2nd place winner in the 2018 Richmond Symphony Orchestra Concerto Competition. Cellist Kendall Gonzales started her musical education at the age of two and

has studied with Michael Daniels of the Virginia Symphony Orchestra. Kendall is the first-place winner of the 2018 Bland Music Competition Local and District Level Concerto competitions. The girls performed the "National Anthem" in March 2018 for a Charlotte Hornets game and performed in February at the International Civil Rights Museum where Reverend Jesse Jackson was awarded the Lifetime Civil Rights Achievement award.

Future VRTA Conferences

conference
in session

Fall 2019 Meeting —October 14-16, 2019

Spring 2020 Delegate Assembly —

April 27-29, 2020



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

**The Executive Committee will meet
Monday, April 29, 2019, from 7:00-9:00 pm
in the Boardroom on first floor at
DoubleTree.**

The Executive Committee of the Board of Directors shall consist of the President, President-elect, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and immediate Past President. The parliamentarian shall be a nonvoting member.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**On Tuesday, April 30, 2019, the Board of
Directors will meet from 9:00—11:30 am in the
Anna Room on first floor at DoubleTree.**

Members of the Board of Directors shall consist of the President, the President-elect, the Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, all past VRTA Presidents, District Presidents, and VRTA committee chairpersons. The parliamentarian and the editor of publications shall be ex-officio, non-voting members. All members of the Board of Directors must be members of the VRTA.

Bylaws and Rules Changes

On Tuesday afternoon one of the sessions will be bylaws and rules changes. Join Parliamentarian Helen Tippie if you have any suggestions for changes to the order of operation of VRTA. This is going to be a "help session." Units are encouraged to bring all the materials that they need with them, including examples of "good" bylaws, as well as bylaws that may need to be tweaked or changed. Please bring copies to share.

While in Richmond

Visit:

- Maymont Park
- Richmond International Raceway
- Children's Museum of Richmond
- The Valentine Museum
- Virginia Museum of Fine Arts
- Richmond Holocaust Museum
- Lewis Ginter Botanical Gardens
- Numerous Civil War Sites



Monday, April 29, 2019
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
MEETS IN
"BOARD ROOM"
7:00-9:00 PM

**VRTA Spring
Delegate Assembly**
April 29-May 1, 2019
DoubleTree
Richmond-Midlothian

Tuesday, April 30, 2019
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
MEETS IN "ANNA ROOM"
9:00-11:30 AM

Note: Registration fees are per person. **Each person attending the conference should fill out a registration form.**

- 1. Registration:** Send a completed registration form and check for **\$60.00**, payable to VRTA, to Maudie Scott P.O. Box 282 Amelia, Va. 23002 postmarked by **Friday, April 12, 2019**. maudie@tds.net
The registration fee includes the organizational costs of the conference as well as the Tuesday Luncheon at 12:00 noon. Please indicate your choice of entrée for the luncheon.
- ◇ Grilled Queen Cut Prime Rib of Beef (Seasonal Vegetables, Mashed Potatoes)
 - ◇ Grilled Salmon (Topped with Lemon Beurre Blanc Sauce, Vegetable Medley, Sour Cream Mashed Potatoes)
 - ◇ Vegetarian—**This will be the chef's choice.**

- 2. Room Registration:** Attendees make room reservations no later than **Monday, April 8, 2019**, by contacting the Hilton at **1-800-222-Tree** or **804-379-3800**. Attendees request the Virginia Retired Teachers' Association rate of \$106.00/night plus state and local taxes. *This rate is good for up to 4 people per room.* Additionally, this room rate is good 3 days prior to our event and 3 days after our event.

3. Personal Information for Registration: Please print clearly.

Name: _____ Phone: _____
Home Address: _____
Email Address: _____
District and Unit: _____

4. Emergency Contact:

Name: _____ Phone: _____

5. **Banner/Scrapbook Information:** District and local banners will be displayed in the banquet room at the assembly. **Units and Districts are required to bring a stand to display their banner.** Scrapbooks will be displayed on a table near the registration table.

Note: All VRTA members are required to pay the registration fee. Those of you that have a travel companion that is not a VRTA member, can invite your companion to attend the luncheon by paying an additional \$33.00 to cover the cost of their meal and service fees. Add the cost to the registration and indicate their meal choice as well as yours.

Plan to come to Richmond early or stay later, after the assembly, and explore all that the Richmond area has to offer in the springtime. This is a great way for retirees to have a less expensive holiday in a richly rewarding environment.

Virginia Retired
Teachers Association
Susan Martin
Newsletter Editor
1049 Martins Lane
Fincastle, VA 24090

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From the Treasurer

Many of our local units will start collecting dues for the 2019-2020 membership year, as VRTA has requested. We hope you will encourage all your local members to renew at all three levels of membership: local, district (a few of our larger units are also districts) and state. Local treasurers and presidents are encouraged to promote membership in VRTA. Help us to have a strong presence across the state, especially in Richmond, by growing our membership numbers and raising our voices.

Here are a few reminders as you begin collecting dues for next year:

- Start now collecting and submitting state dues for the 2019-2020 membership year. VRTA state dues are \$20 per member or \$200 for a life membership.
- Membership forms, dues settlement statements and membership cards will be available for pick up at the Treasurer's table during the Spring Delegate Assembly in Richmond on April 29 and 30. They are also available upon request from the state treasurer.
- If you have not already done so, please submit a copy of your 2018-2019 budget to the state treasurer, signed and dated by two officers. They are past due.
- IRS e-post card reports should have been submitted electronically by November 15 to the IRS for any local or district who is a part of the VRTA Tax Umbrella. If you have not done so, it is not too late to file your report.
- Don't forget to continue sending me the names of deceased members so that the rolls can be updated.

Contact information: Weldon Martin
1049 Martins Lane
Fincastle, VA 24090
hooman4949@gmail.com
540-473-2636

