



# VRTA Newsletter

Publication of Virginia Retired Teachers Association

Member, NRTA—Division of The AARP

Spring 2020 Edition

## A Message from the VRTA President



As I compose my last message for the VRTA newsletter, I can reflect on all the wonderful people I have met over the years since joining VRTA in 2008. It has been my pleasure to serve as your President-elect and President. VRTA is such a vital organization for the well-being of all educator retirees throughout the Commonwealth and distant places. We have VRTA members who have moved away from Virginia but they maintain their membership in VRTA. In all that I have tried to accomplish in my tenure as a VRTA leader, I have always tried to keep our Mission Statement at the forefront of my thoughts and actions; “To be the voice, resource and connection for all retired school personnel.”

In order for VRTA to continue to thrive and to protect all that we have as retirees, commitment is required from everyone. We are always asking for volunteers to step forward. It is imperative for you to reflect and ask yourself, what can I do to help VRTA? By participating on committees or leadership positions, you are helping not only the 5700 members but you are directly helping yourself. In my home unit of Fauquier, we have a little over 100 members, but I can tell you we have more than that who have retired who are not members. They are the “free-riders”, gaining the benefit of what we try and do, without participating. It is just like the annual pledge drive for public broadcast TV. They ask for money but many people watch the PBS network programming without contributing to it in order to stay on the air. In order for VRTA to stay dynamic, we must capture these free-riders and get them involved.

One again, I am asking Vice-President Reba Evans to focus a breakout session on membership. New members are the lifeblood of our organization. President-elect Glenn Pair, Sr. has been working hard to secure our entertainment and keynote speaker. Together with Weldon Martin and Leigh McKay, your leadership has served you, the member, very well. I am grateful for all that they do to make my job easier.

Leigh McKay has agreed to take over the VRTA Directory. She is in transition, as she is moving out of state. **Please make sure you send me all of your leadership changes**, as you hold elections this spring. Leigh is fearful that she will miss some changes while she is in transition. Send your changes to me at [bhmccart@gmail.com](mailto:bhmccart@gmail.com) or to my home address, 236 Amber Circle Warrenton, Va. 20186. I will give them to Leigh at the Spring Delegate Assembly when she is in attendance.

Speaking of the Delegate Assembly, please plan on having delegates from your unit in attendance. It is important for each and every unit to have input into the direction VRTA charts for the future. The Doubletree Hotel has been very gracious to VRTA with its many meeting rooms and AV assistance. If you attended the fall conference, you are aware of the complete refurbishment of the Doubletree. They have done a great job. With that being said, please fill out the registration form and send it in to Maudie Scott as soon as you can. We moved back the date of the newsletter being published, in order to get it out to you in a timely fashion. There is a late fee imposed if you miss the registration deadline. Additionally, the Doubletree will give you the conference rate for up to three days, on either side of the Delegate Assembly. Take advantage of a great rate and see the many sights of the metropolitan Richmond area in the spring. There are so many places to visit. Make the VRTA Delegate Assembly the centerpiece of a mini spring vacation. If you wish to bring a guest, and have them join us for the luncheon, please fill out a registration form, meal selection and include a check for their lunch. We would love to have them join us.

**Visit VRTA's Website at [VRTA.org](http://VRTA.org)**

## Inside this issue:

*Message from VRTA President* 1-2

*Community Service* 2

*What is Success?* 3

*News from Around the Commonwealth* 4-9

*VRTA Delegate Assembly Information* 10-12

*VRTA Delegate Assembly Registration Form* 11

Page 2 - "The best advocates work as partners, not enemies. Good advocates manage to let go of fear, prejudice and thoughtlessness. Our focus should be education—educating ourselves and educating those who make public policy."

## President's Message, continued

What can you expect when you attend the VRTA Delegate Assembly? We are trying to put together interesting breakout sessions. As usual, Bea Morris will have an outstanding program for the legislative session. There will be a very informative VRS presentation and of course, the Marketplace will be available. If you are interested in having a table in the Marketplace for your unit or district, please let me know ASAP at [bhmccart@gmail.com](mailto:bhmccart@gmail.com). It is a great way to raise funds for your scholarship or grant fund. We will still have ten Walmart gift cards to give away and I will select one room number of an overnight attendee, and personally write them a check for \$75 as my appreciation for attending. We will still have the 50/50 raffle, with proceeds going to one of the six organizations VRTA supports with our philanthropy. I still need suggestions for Tuesday evening. I like to do trivia, but many do not like my questions. We can do charades or board games, or have a movie in one of the breakout rooms. Please give me your thoughts so that I can plan for that evening.

I am going to end my message with our VRTA Vision Statement: "All retired school personnel will be safe, secure, productive, informed and financially secure in retirement." It is my heartfelt wish that the 2020 VRTA Spring Delegate Assembly will meet all your needs. Please join us April 27 through April 29. You will come away with valuable information to share in your local RTA.  
Ben McCartney, VRTA President

## What is Public Policy and How do You Change it?

By Bonnie Atwood

The legal definition of "public policy" is a set of actions the government takes to address issues. Examples of issues are healthcare or gun control. Public policy on major issues such as these can take years to develop, and often they are constantly changing. Public policy affects a wide segment of society, not just a small group. In our advocacy work, VRTA often concentrates on one small change in law, such as a pay raise, or a personnel concern. We must also see the "big picture," i.e., the enormous policies that keep everything in place.

A policy might be that education should be available to all children in a given age group. A policy might be that public education is free of charge to families who use it. A policy might be that families can "opt out" if they meet certain criteria to educate their children at home instead of the schoolhouse.

Just as legislation changes from year to year, public policy evolves. There is a constant need for change. Public policy can take years to enact.

There are several "players" at work on public policy. They include: politicians, civil servants, lobbyists, and industry representatives. They change public policy by advocating for what they want, educating supporters and opponents, and gathering allies.

The best advocates work as partners, not enemies. Good advocates manage to let go of fear, prejudice and thoughtlessness. Our focus should be education—educating ourselves and educating those who make public policy.

I'm proud to say that VRTA is very good at just that. You've been educators in your career years, and now you are excellent educators in influencing public policy.

### Future VRTA Conferences

Fall 2020 VRTA Meeting —October 5-7, 2020  
Spring Delegate Assembly — April 26-28,  
2021



## Community Service/With Our Youth

The Virginia Retired Teachers Community Service/With Our Youth report for the year 2018-2019 is the following:

Thirty-one of 84 units reported this year.

18,160 youth were served.

688 members reported a total of 129,462.25 hours of community service.

These volunteer hours convert into a monetary value of \$3,292,225.

The Virginia Retired Teachers are still making a difference in the state. We thank you for your work and reports. Please continue to volunteer your services.

Louise Mont-Adams, Chairperson

## Virginia Retired Teachers Association

"Organized November 28, 1936"

2018- 2020 Officers

President—Ben McCartney	(540)347-9516 <a href="mailto:bhmccart@gmail.com">bhmccart@gmail.com</a>
President-Elect—Glenn Pair, Sr.	(434)594-9661 <a href="mailto:gpair1949@gmail.com">gpair1949@gmail.com</a>
Vice President—Reba Evans	(366)200-1093 <a href="mailto:1924rlevans@gmail.com">1924rlevans@gmail.com</a>
Secretary—Leigh McKay	(540)989-4417 <a href="mailto:cwmck5@cox.net">cwmck5@cox.net</a>
Treasurer—Weldon Martin	(540)473-2636 <a href="mailto:hooman4949@gmail.com">hooman4949@gmail.com</a>
Immediate Past President Nina McClanahan	(276)935-5004 <a href="mailto:mcclanahannina@gmail.com">mcclanahannina@gmail.com</a>

## WHAT IS SUCCESS?



First, a big thank you to all of you who have worked, not only this year but for many years, to see that all our colleagues receive the health insurance credit, a benefit we as teachers have had for a long time. Delegate Delores McQuinn has never given up on providing this benefit for all school retirees, and she deserves our deepest gratitude for carrying this bill many years. Our patience and perseverance have paid off since HB 1513 not only was reported from the subcommittee that usually killed it, it has passed the House with a good margin and even had the support of delegates who had voted against it in the past. As I write this on February 24, the bill is in the Senate Finance Committee. I just got word that the bill is on the docket for tomorrow. At this point, we don't know what the outcome will be, but we have made progress. In a time of such negativity, we should take heart because small successes on the way to a goal give us optimism and encouragement that we will prevail.

In the coming months, we must prepare to be informed, knowledgeable voters. We are already beginning to be bombarded with mailers, and the media are filled with campaign rhetoric. What can we believe? Is there anyone or anything we can trust? The focus in the Legislative Workshop at the Spring Delegate Assembly will be Truth and Media. Success will be leaving the workshop with confidence that we have the tools to be discerning media consumers. **Plan now to join us in the Legislative Workshop on Tuesday afternoon, April 28.**

**The VRS staff will make a presentation on Wednesday morning, April 29.** This is an opportunity that few people have at the local level to hear directly from those responsible for the operations and management of our retirement system and to ask them questions.

Success for the Spring Delegate Assembly will be enhanced by representation of every unit across the state. Beneficial workshops, interesting speakers, and opportunities to learn from discussions with others have been designed to contribute to the success of local leaders. We look forward to seeing you April 28-29!

Bea Morris, Legislative Chairperson

## From the Treasurer

As you are finishing up collection of dues for the 2019-2020 membership year, and are beginning collection of dues for the 2020-2021 membership year this spring, I hope you will encourage all of your members to consider purchasing a membership at the state level. Our state organization is a strong advocate for retired educators all across the state of Virginia and the benefits received from membership are worth the \$20 annual dues or a life membership at \$200. Local unit treasurers can play an important role in membership recruitment for VRTA and we appreciate all of your efforts in helping us to renew memberships and to recruit new members.

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

- Start now collecting and submitting dues for the 2020-2021 membership year. State dues are \$20 annually or \$200 for a life membership.
- Membership forms, dues settlement forms and membership cards will be available for pick up at the Spring Delegate Assembly in Richmond on April 28 and 29. They are also available upon request at any time from the treasurer.
- Please remember to submit a copy of your 2019-20 budget to the treasurer if you have not already done so. They should be signed and dated by two officers.
- IRS e-post card reports should have been submitted electronically by November 15 by local units or districts who are included under the VRTA Tax Umbrella. If you haven't submitted your report, it is not too late to do so. Some contact persons have reported that they were contacted regarding paying a fee for submission of the e-post cards. You can file your e-post card at no cost by going to the IRS website. You are not required to pay a fee for filing.
- The VRTA annual report to the IRS is due by the end of March. If you have changed your contact person for e-post card filing or officially changed your unit's name, please notify the treasurer no later than March 30, so that it can be included in the report being submitted to the IRS on March 30. This is the only opportunity to make changes in contact names, addresses, email addressed, etc. for this year.
- Don't forget to continue sending the treasurer the names of deceased members so that we can keep our rolls up to date.

Contact information:

Weldon Martin, Treasurer  
1049 Martins Lane  
Fincastle, VA 24090  
[hooman4949@gmail.com](mailto:hooman4949@gmail.com)  
(540) 473-2636



### A Great Award Year

This year has been an outstanding and a rewarding year. Thanks for your support and cooperation. As you read the report, you will note the improvement and growth. Please continue the good work and encourage others.

Summary of the Fall 2019 Report:

- 57 unit reports were received by June 30.
- 10 unit reports were received after June 30.
- 3 districts reported.
- There were 11 early bird reports.
- 13 districts had 100% unit reports by June 30.
- 22 unit banners were displayed both fall and spring.
- 4 districts had 100% unit banners displayed both fall and spring.
- 8 district banners were displayed both fall and spring.
- 64 units gave scholarships.
- 7 districts gave scholarships.
- \$226,675 was given in scholarships.
- 16 districts had 100% unit scholarship participation.
- 19 units had equalized membership in the unit, district and VRTA.
- 9 special awards were given for units making the early bird list from 3-6 years.

Districts receiving the most awards:

D—50	E—19
N—27	T—15
P—24	I—13

A total of 231 awards were presented. Make the awards even greater next year. Canzata B. Turner, Awards Chairperson

### Increasing Membership in VRTA

The Fall VRTA Conference met in October and the Membership Committee session met and listed suggestions for the use of the VRTA posters available on the VRTA website. Two posters are available to download. Have the posters printed and use them to promote membership. VRTA would like to hear from those who have used the posters. Please report on how many you had printed, where they were posted and how effective they were in increasing your membership. Another membership session will be held in the spring. This would be a good time to deliver your report.

The Brand for VRTA is to “ENRICH RETIRED SCHOOL PERSONNEL’S LIVES.” We want to target new retirees, as well as older retirees, to join or rejoin the organization. Posters could be placed in schools, churches, restaurants, post offices, libraries and residential living facilities. A blitz in August or September might be the best time to do this.

#### WHY JOIN VRTA?

- VRTA has a strong voice in the Virginia Legislature.
- Two VRTA newsletters are published each year.
- Insurance and investment options are available to VRTA members.
- As part of the NRTA/AARP, discounts are available with your NRTA membership.

When you join AARP, ask that your membership be as a member of NRTA (National Retired Teachers Association). It does not cost any more than the AARP low membership rate and your card will show that you are a member of NRTA. NRTA was first formed to help retired teachers. Other groups wanted the same privileges as retired teachers, so AARP was formed.

## News From Around the Commonwealth

### Henrico Retired School Personnel Association Presents Scholarships in the Spring

The Henrico Retired School Personnel Association held its spring luncheon at the Willow Oaks Country Club on Thursday, April 25, 2019. Besides a great lunch and fellowship, members were treated to an outstanding presentation by Dr. Amy Cashwell, the new superintendent of Henrico County Public Schools. Members were also introduced to the HRSPA 2019 student scholarship winner, Andy Harris, who received \$2,000 and the two HRSPA 2019 teacher scholarship winners, Sarah Porter and Lisa Rogers, who each received \$1,000.



Andy Harris



Lisa Rogers



Sarah Porter

### Henrico Retired SPA Has Spooky Lunch

The Henrico Retired School Personnel Association really enjoyed our spooky fall luncheon on October 31, 2019, at the Willow Oaks Country Club. Led by our fearless leader, Jackie Warren, we had wonderful presentations by Andy Jenks, Director of Communications for Henrico County Public Schools, Andrea Collins, the 2019 Henrico Christmas Mother, and Jim DuBrueler, the VRTA insurance agent of record. We were filled with spooky Halloween foods and appropriately dressed colleagues helped to celebrate the occasion.



Spooky fall luncheon



## News From Around the Commonwealth

### Alexandria Retired Teachers Have Had a Busy Fall

Alexandria Retired Teachers Association is now meeting at Fairlington United Methodist Church on the third Monday of every month. During our meetings we hold a 50/50, selling tickets for \$1.00 and half the money collected goes to our scholarship fund, while the other half goes to a lucky member! We also remind members to bring canned goods to each meeting for ALIVE, the city food bank.

Our organization has had a busy fall. In September we had the director of benefits from human services of Alexandria City Public Schools to talk to us and answer questions about our benefits as retired employees.

In October, we had Jon Tancinco, a master sommelier, speak to the group about how to determine the quality of wine. This was a wonderful opportunity for the group to learn about the different wines and what to look for in the various wines.

On October 24, 22 ARTA members and guests visited two wineries, Philip Carter and Blue Valley. Everyone had an opportunity to put Jon's techniques to a test! It was a beautiful day and a pleasure to sip wine with friends. We left Fairlington United Methodist Church at 10:30 (back up on 395!) and went to Hume, Virginia, to the Phillip Carter Vineyard where we had our first tasting of 10 wines, followed by box lunches from Panera. The views were incredible. We also had wine infused chocolate which many of us purchased as gifts for family and friends. From Philip Carter, we went to the Blue Valley Vineyard.

In November, we had our combined meeting with Arlington Retired Teachers. In December, we had our annual holiday concert with the Mount Vernon Men's Chorus and a visit from Santa Claus.



Winery Visit on October 24h



Mount Vernon Men's Chorus Entertain and Santa Visits

### Buchanan County Makes Christmas Donations

BCRTA met on December 9, 2019, at Peking's Restaurant for a luncheon and to finalize its Christmas donations. The group made donations to *Boys and Girls Club of Central Appalachia*, *Shop With a Cop* and *Buchanan County Coal Miner's Christmas and Special Needs Fund*.



Pictured L-R: seated—Doris Stiltner, Penny Jennell, Barbara Compton and Lillian Dales standing: Cindy Matney, Berneda Gillispie, Patricia Hogston, Judy Holland, Nina McClanahan, Joan Boyd and Donna Hager

### Members of District G Attend VRTA Fall Conference

All four local units in District G were represented at the Virginia Retired Teachers Association (VRTA) fall conference at the Doubletree in Richmond.



Left to right: Sharon Helbert (Shenandoah County RTA), Jackie Stephenson (Bath/Highland RTA), Karen Whetzel (Shenandoah County RTA and District G president), Rita Lancaster (Page County RTA) and Bea Morris (Augusta Retired Educator's Association and District G and VRTA legislative chairperson). Whetzel and Morris serve on the VRTA board of directors.

### Prince William Retired Teachers

Prince William Retired Teachers' President, Dr. Sally Kenavan, with hats, scarves, gloves and mittens collected for two area shelters, ACTS and SERVE



## News From Around the Commonwealth

### The Floyd County Retired Teachers' Association Works for the Good of the Community

The Floyd County Retired Teachers' Association is a very active and involved organization. Although we are not a large group, we are dedicated to actively serving our schools and community in various capacities. Last year, we funded two \$1000 scholarships to two deserving seniors at Floyd County High School. We also made monetary donations to four local community groups including RIFF (Reading is Fundamental in Floyd), Christmas for Children, Young Life (whose mission is to lead young people to Christ), and the NRCC Backpack Program. We are very proud to award \$200 mini-grants each to two deserving teachers each year; however, this year, we were able to award four mini-grants. Our winners, along with their projects, are listed below:

Marsha Vass of Willis Elementary School – Marsha will be purchasing rocket kits to use with her twenty-five 6<sup>th</sup> grade science students as they engage in their project "Blast into Space".

Jennifer Sharp-Knott of Floyd County High School – Jennifer, who is a chemistry teacher at the high school, is purchasing supplies to create hands-on models of atoms and for activities to foster an understanding of the periodic table.

Kimberly Ingram of Floyd County High School – Kimberly, an art teacher at the high school, will purchase Logitech Crayons for her art students to use with Apple iPads the school recently acquired for shared use. These pencils will enable students to use drawing and painting apps and will benefit around 110 art students during the course of the year.

Mendy Spence of Indian Valley Elementary School – Mendy, the Title I teacher, and others at Indian Valley Elementary School want to buy materials for a school-wide project (130 students) for STEAM related activities connected to the book *Jeremy Thatcher, Dragon Hatcher*, which the entire school is reading. They plan to have an Intercession Day with 20 hands-on stations.

The FCRTA congratulates each winner, and we wish them the best as they pursue their exciting projects with their students!

We look forward to the rest of the year as we have meetings with guest speakers planned, and also several exciting and educational outings coming up!

### Franklin/Southampton Retired Teachers' Association Receives "With Our Youth"

#### Community Service Award

Members of Franklin/Southampton Retired Teachers' Association received the "With our Youth" Community Service Award due to donations of classroom supplies to Southampton County Public Schools and Franklin City Public Schools each year. We donate school supplies in January rather than September because we realize that there are multiple vendors supplying materials at the beginning of the school year.



(L to R): Mr. Charles R. Haskins, Jr, Mrs. Sylvia Claud, Mrs. Daphne Miller, Mrs. Cheryl Roberts, Mrs. Carol Logan, Mrs. Bessie Smith, and Mr. Thomas Smith

### Loudoun Retired Educators Association Volunteer Awards May-December 2019



From left: Susan Mills-500+ hours, Sue Clark-300+ hours, Jeff Jackson-400+ hours, Ann Thorsen-700+ hours, Linda Greeley-300+ hours, Bert Jackson-300+ hours

### Wythe County RTA Installs Officers for 2019-2020



Officers:  
Patricia Aker, President; Letty Nance, Secretary; Anne Sealander, Vice-President; Sidney Crockett, Treasurer.





## News From Around the Commonwealth

### Greenville Retired Teachers Unity Project

The Greenville Retired Teachers Association recently completed its Unity Project. The project consisted of collecting canned goods and nonperishable food items to be distributed to a Greenville/Emporia food bank. Upon completing the project, members of the GRTA presented the food to the Samaritan House in Emporia where Rev. Ronnie Franklin, director, received the items.

GRTA's mission is: Sharing, Advocating, and Supporting. Members also participate individually in Community Service and With Our Youth activities and report to the district and state organizations. They log their hours for doing tutoring, visiting nursing/retirement homes, leading church ministry work, planning activities for youth, etc. and send the number of hours to District D Retired Teachers Association and Virginia Retired Teachers Association. The VRTA uses this information when they go before the General Assembly of Virginia to make appeals for support of education. GRTA is a nonprofit organization made up of retired teachers and school personnel.



Participating in the Unity Project were the following: Mrs. Joan G. Inniss, Mrs. Calvin P. Hawkins, Mrs. Frances P. McDonald, Mrs. Thelma Atkins-Riley, Mrs. Carolyn J. High, Mrs. Elma A. Brown, Mrs. Cleo L. Goodwyn, Mrs. Genell T. Smith, GRTA President, and Rev. Ronnie Franklin, Director.

### Shenandoah County Presents Scholarship

The Shenandoah County Education Association presented its 2019 scholarship to Megan Estep, a paraprofessional at W. W. Robinson Elementary School, who has her associates degree and is working on her B. S. degree in Elementary Education. She has also worked at Pollywog Place with preschool children.

Ms. Estep and her husband, Aaron Estep, are both Shenandoah County natives and plan to raise their two children in the Shenandoah County. She knows the value of having good teachers in classrooms.

In a letter of recommendation, one of Ms. Estep's colleagues says that she understands the developmental needs of students, maintains high expectations for student's academic work and behavior while being empathetic to student needs, and is a true professional.

### Patrick County Retired Teachers are on the Move

Patrick County Retired Teachers began their first meeting of the year in September with a successful auction sale to raise funds for their annual outreach projects. In October a picnic was held for PARC, an organization that trains mildly handicapped clients. In November, retired teachers worked with the extension service and other agencies in providing simulated experiences in money management for sophomores and seniors at the local high school.

December was a busy time with a visit to Patrick County Developmental Center that works with severely handicapped clients. Retired teachers, staff, and clients enjoy music, gifts, and a monetary donation. Besides Christmas Cheer donations, PCHS provides birthday bags to each resident at the local nursing home with a December birthday. A scholarship of \$500 is awarded annually to a graduating senior who plans to enter the field of teaching.

Monetary donations in various amounts go to 4-H programs such as Kids on the Move, sunshine committee, picnic for newly retired teachers, kits of medication for head lice for all schools (7) in the county, and finally, meals for guests.

PCRTA volunteers also participate with the backpack program and a host of school activities from tutoring to reading to students to judging and organizing events, all that do not require funding.

However, the auction sale has made possible funds for more outreach projects while providing entertainment and giving members that shopping experience!



Patrick County Retired Teachers prepare a picnic for clients at PARC Workshop. PCR-TA member Janet Moore (R) reacts to a word of thanks from a client.

Margaret Figgins, SCRTA scholarship chairperson, and Mega Estep



## News From Around the Commonwealth

### Richmond-Henrico Retired Teachers

Richmond-Henrico Retired Teachers Association members continue to focus on making a difference in the lives of youth in our community. This focus is evident through the support of the following October and December Projects: Feed More's Central Virginia Food Bank Back Pack Program, school supplies for four District Q elementary schools, caps/gloves for two preschool learning centers and the Richmond/Henrico Christmas Mother Funds. Our members also look forward to reading to the children on Read Across America/Dr. Seuss Day, March 2, 2020. The children will receive Motivational Pencils and Stickers.



Dr. Harris

R-HRTA members and guests enjoyed their annual December Luncheon on December 17, 2020, at Imperial Plaza. The guest speaker was Dr. Shadae Harris, Chief Engagement Officer for Richmond Public Schools. She shared with us RPS Five Priorities that will help put Richmond Public Schools on the same playing field as the surrounding counties. Dr. Harris invited R-HRTA members to become involved and give their support toward these priorities.

Following the delicious meal, members were entertained with Christmas music by Richmond Public School retired music teacher, Glennroy Baily, Jr. and his pianist, Billy Evans. The "Holiday Spirit" was felt by all in attendance.

Glennroy Baily



### Hanover Retired School Employees Association

Hanover County Public Schools' Superintendent, Dr. Michael Gill, met with Mrs. Deborah Roane, President of the Hanover Retired School Employees Association (HRSEA) at the beginning of the fall 2020 HCPS school year. They had a very informative meeting to discuss ways the Hanover Retired School Employees Association (HRSEA) members could help support the school system by volunteering their time. Dr. Gill shared an insightful list of activities that the retirees could glean from to volunteer in the school system.

The HRSEA will have its spring meeting on Thursday, March 19, 2020, at 1:00 P.M. at The Hanover Center for Trades and Technology (THCTT) on 10002 Learning Lane in Mechanicsville. The association enjoys light refreshments that are prepared and served by the THCTT culinary students. Retired Hanover County Public School employees, old and new, are invited to come out to meet old friends, make new friends, and to bring Back to School Supplies that will be donated to one of the area schools in the 2020 fall school term. The HRSEA invited Dr. Gill to come to its spring, March 19, 2020, meeting to share exciting information about upcoming plans and events of the HCPS.

In the past, the HRSEA has supported HCPS with Back to School Supplies, the Food Bank, the American Red Cross monetary donations for disaster relief, and every year one Hanover County Public School graduating senior receives a \$500 scholarship to use towards college tuition. This year's scholarship will be donated to a Patrick Henry High School graduating senior. Members, guests and those interested in joining the Hanover Retired School Employees Association (HRSEA) are invited to attend the spring and fall 2020 meetings.

Deborah Roane,  
president of HRSEA and  
Dr. Michael Gill



### Page County Retired School Personnel

Page County Retired School Personnel held a meeting to celebrate the holidays at the Luray Fire Hall. The meal was prepared by the Edith Rebekah Lodge. The Luray High School Choir, under the direction of Jake Schupner, entertained the group.

Highlights of the meeting included:

Thanks to Judy Price, Rita Lancaster, Patty Roberts and Mary Lou Swensen for hosting the Massanutten School House during the Heritage Festival.

Thanks to Patty Roberts for designing the unit's banner, displayed at the VRTA Fall Meeting.

A memory Lane display was about the book and movie, *Same Kind of Difference as Me*, which addresses homelessness. The "give back to the community" was members collecting \$350.00 for ARISE to help homelessness.

Raffle ticket books were distributed to help raise money for two \$750.00 scholarships.

Donna Epping, Mary Lou Swensen and Jane Thompson won door prizes.



Luray High School Choir entertains Page County Retired School Personnel



## News From Around the Commonwealth

### Allegheny County RTA Has a Busy Year

Each of the four meetings had meaningful programs beginning with the September 2018 meeting. At that meeting, Amanda Kaster, a registered dietitian with Carilion Stonewall Jackson Hospital, presented a program on the importance of healthy eating to better mental and physical health.

In December 2018 Allegheny High School Choral Groups directed by Amanda Sprouse entertained ARTA members with a variety of holiday selections. Michelle Wright, the Christmas mother, discussed the goals of the Christmas Mother Program. She thanked ARTA members for their donations of money, toys, books, food, clothing, and cleaning supplies to support this program that is serving 625 children and youth, as well as many adults this year.

Senator Creigh Deeds spoke on "Schools and the Legislature" at the March 2019 meeting. Members turned in the volunteer hours' form at the March meeting.

In May 2019 Douglas Jones, the Workforce Programming Coordinator for Dabney S. Lancaster Community College, was the guest speaker. Mr. Jones discussed the Workforce Solutions and Community Education program at DSLCC and explained how it is benefiting local students, as well as area businesses.

At the May 2019 meeting, the following officers were installed by Donna Vaughn: President—Joan Green; Vice President—Anita Rice; Secretary—Margaret Sams; and Treasurer—Renee Warren.

Last year ARTA awarded three \$500 scholarships at the March meeting. Recipients were Justin Clarke (Allegheny High School), Zach Silver (Allegheny High School) and Brandon Seay (Covington High School). The scholarships are funded through donations from members; memorial donations to honor deceased teachers; and the 50/50 drawings. In addition, District P gives each unit \$150 annually to use for scholarships. All donations to the fund are appreciated and are tax deductible.

In addition to supporting the Christmas Mother program, ARTA members donated school supplies to local schools and donated a large number of items and donations for local food pantries.

Members of ARTA attended the spring and fall District P meetings in Roanoke and the spring and fall meetings of VRTA in Richmond. Members who attended reported on those meetings and encouraged other members to attend in the future.

All ARTA members are encouraged to invite other retired teachers to attend a meeting and join ARTA as the association attempts to serve students, schools, and area citizens.



District N's Fall Meeting was held in Culpeper. Members attending the meeting brought socks, gloves, mittens, hats and scarves. The items were sent to the Dakota Sioux community in Eagle Butte, South Dakota.

### Arlington County RTA Authors Share Their Books

Arlington's retirees continue to learn as they welcomed two authors over the last few months. At our meeting on November 13, Nadine James, a retired Fairfax County reading specialist, visited with us to share her experiences as part of the Memoir Roundtable, the producers of the book *Memoir Your Way*. Throughout her remarks, Nadine reminded each of us that we have stories to tell and gave us ideas for doing so. Many members bought a copy of the book that includes sections on how to: interview to secure family stories; create a scrapbook with pictures; tell stories with recipe collections; develop a graphic novel; or use fabric to tell quilt stories. This useful and informative book is available on Amazon and at bookstores.

Dr. Juanita Patience Moss joined us on February 12. Dr. Moss is a fellow retired educator, her family's griot, a researcher and author of nine books detailing her research on Black Civil War soldiers whose service in white regiments had not been documented. Her focus on that day was the family-related research shared in her latest book *Deeply Rooted in North Carolina*. It tells the story of two runaway slave brothers forever separated after joining the Union Army. Through the years, descendants of Pvt. Thomas Patience, Joseph Lawrence's great-great grandfather and Pvt. Crowder Patience, Juanita's great grandfather knew nothing of the other. Thanks to 23andMe DNA tests that supplied names of relatives, a 154-year-old mystery was solved. Members found her presentation interesting and discussion was rich with questions and the sharing of family histories. Dr. Moss's books are available on her website, [www.journeyfromthepast.com](http://www.journeyfromthepast.com).



Dr. Juanita Patience Moss (left) visited ARTA on February 12. President Nancy King thanked her for sharing her research with the group.

### District N



District N members attend VRTA Fall Conference

## SPRING DELEGATE ASSEMBLY

In order to better serve all VRTA members at the Spring Delegate Assembly, we will have coffee and tea available in the James River Corridor beginning at 8AM. **Assorted muffins will be available both days.**

For those not attending the Board of Directors meeting on Tuesday morning, information tables will be manned in the corridor during the Board meeting. VRTA Treasurer Weldon Marin will be available to assist you with questions concerning dues and membership. Creekside Insurance will have a staffed table to answer your questions on Medicare, long-term care and annuities.

The Marketplace will be up and running. Right now we have three local RTA units who wish to display their wares. Let me know if your RTA unit would like to participate. We will have the 50/50 table.

Since the deadline for the newsletter was earlier than normal, we were unable to announce the speaker and the entertainment in this newsletter. The newsletter should be received early enough to give everyone the opportunity to register for the Delegate Assembly in a timely manner and not incur a late fee.

## Report from the Nominating Committee

The nominating committee presented a slate of officers for 2020-2022 at the 2019 VRTA Fall Conference.

The following people were nominated:

Jean Marrow – President-elect  
Karen Whetzel – Vice President  
Reba Evans – Secretary  
Weldon Martin – Treasurer



These officers will be installed at the 2020 Delegate Assembly.

## Fall 2020 Newsletter

The deadline for the fall newsletter is Monday, August 3, 2020. Submit articles and pictures to Susan Martin at: susanmartin730@gmail.com or at: 1049 Martins Lane Fincastle, VA 24090



## From the Bylaws Committee

Helen Tippie will be available at the Spring Delegate Assembly if you have concerns or questions about your unit's or district's bylaws. There will not be a formal presentation at the meeting. You can also email Helen at: htippie70@gmail.com.

## VRTA TENTATIVE BREAKOUT SESSIONS SPRING DELEGATE ASSEMBLY 2020

### Home Fit- Modify Your Home for Safety and Comfort

Information will be provided to participants on how to decide what type home modifications are needed to stay in their homes as they age. The goal is to educate participants on home updates that can make it easier for them to go about their daily activities while staying comfortable, independent, and injury-free in their home.

### Decluttering and Downsizing

Information will be provided in this session on how to decide what to keep and what not to keep as participants decide if they need to downsize their living accommodations.

### Virginia History

A fun review of Virginia History, presented by Janet Dye, president-elect of District N, concentrating on Gov. Spotswood's 1716 very short trip into the Shenandoah Valley and his Trans-Montaigne Expedition—the Knights of the Golden Horseshoe.

### Age Blasters: 3 Steps to a Younger You

Led by the ever popular Ed Mayhew, enjoy and learn the stories of three individuals who are documented to have reversed their biological age by a decade or two. Find out how they did it and how you can too!

### Membership Recruitment and Retention

Once again, Vice-President Reba Evans will lead this session on publicity to members, future retirees and the public. Attendees need to bring some of their best ideas to share and brainstorm ideas to attract new members and retain existing members.

### VRTA Benefits

Jim DuBrueler will talk about the financial opportunities, for investing, available to VRTA members as well as flat-fee estate planning.

### Legislative Session

Bea Morris will once again put together a program that is important for all of us to take home to our local units.

### Security Consulting

Michael Jones will highlight the problems in our schools today, based on existing facilities, innovations in security and overall what can be done to make our schools safer for everyone.

### Go Book!

Ben McCartney is going to review the components of his Go Book, with participants. Ben says, "I keep it in a place where my beneficiaries know to find it. It contains all pertinent information that is needed by my beneficiaries if and when I become incapacitated, or pass on. Hopefully, this book will provide a smooth transition to my beneficiaries in settling my estate. Be prepared to bring your ideas to add to my Go Book. **(If we have too many sessions during the day on Tuesday, I am prepared to run this session on Tuesday evening during the time slotted for entertainment such as trivia or board games.)**"

### School Safety and Security Topics

Presented by Michael Jones (still pending)



Monday, April 27, 2020  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
MEETS IN "BOARD  
ROOM"  
7:00-9:00 PM

**VRTA Spring Delegate Assembly**  
**April 28-29, 2020**  
**DoubleTree**  
**Richmond-Midlothian**

Tuesday, April 28, 2020  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
MEET 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 **Monday, April 13, 2020**. [maudie@tds.net](mailto:maudie@tds.net) **REGISTRATIONS RECEIVED AFTER THE 13<sup>TH</sup> POSTMARK WILL BE \$70.00!**

Avoid the late registration fee. Register early!

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.

- ◇ Sliced tri tip of beef (served with wild mushroom demi-glace, seasonal vegetables and oven roasted potatoes, garden salad, death by chocolate cake, coffee/tea)
- ◇ Grilled filet of salmon (served with lemon beurre blanc sauce, mixed wild rice and seasonal vegetables, garden salad, death by chocolate cake, coffee/tea)
- ◇ Vegetarian—This will be the chef's choice.

- 2. Room Registration:** Attendees make room reservations no later than **Monday, April 20, 2020**, by contacting the Hilton at **1-800-222-Tree** or **804-379-3800**. Attendees request the Virginia Retired Teachers' Association rate of \$110.00/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. **Richmond in the spring is a great vacation!**

**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 conference. **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. Please note your quest's choice for lunch on your form.** Register early, to avoid a late charge, and take advantage of all that Richmond has to offer by extending your stay!



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

U. S POSTAGE  
PAID  
Daleville, VA  
Permit No. 38  
ZIP CODE 24083  
PRSRT STD

Return Service Requested

### **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**The Executive Committee will meet  
Monday, April 27, 2020, from 7:00-9:00 pm  
in the *Boardroom* on first floor at the  
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 28, 2020, 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.

### **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!”**

**RETIRED**  
*but*  
*forever*  
*a*  
**TEACHER**   
*at heart*