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Washington County Retired Teachers Association

An Affiliate of the Ohio Retired Teachers Association

July 2011

"The summer hath his joys,
and winter his delights..."

Thomas Campion (1567-1620)

Summer is fleeting, and it's been a busy one. I have stuffed myself with corn, green beans, tomatoes, and all kinds of fruits, especially the peaches. I should probably limit myself to eating fruit alone, but I have a bad habit of putting it into pies, breads, and muffins. One my favorite recipes is for raspberry bars that are out of this world. I am a regular at the farmers' markets and the produce stands. I'm really fond of the farmers' market at the Washington County Fairgrounds. I am a big fan of foods that are produced locally when they are available.

The back to school sales seem to start earlier and earlier each year. I'm very happy in retirement, but I do miss the excitement of the start of a new school year. Among the many things I don't miss are the heat and the seemingly endless meetings where we had to hear exactly what we had heard the year before.

It seems as if our June meeting was just last week. We enjoyed the entertainment provided by WCRTA Member Rusty Kidd and his friends from The Treblemakers. The food was good and certainly plentiful. Kay Cline asked if her plate of chicken was supposed to serve the whole table. Our next meeting is at the Lafayette Hotel Wednesday, August 10, at 12 sharp. Helen Drake reports that the menu this month will be meat loaf (one of my favorite comfort foods), mashed potatoes, green beans and corn, plus the customary salad and accompaniments, along with peach pie for dessert. The price of the meal remains at \$13.00, which includes the gratuity. Make a reservation by calling Joyce Ross at 373-2359. You can also make a reservation by e-mail at:

jross1007@sbcglobal.net

The deadline to make a reservation is Sunday, August 7, by 8 P.M.

Make plans now to attend our August meeting, and consider inviting a friend to come along. We have asked the 2011 recipient of the WCRTA Scholarship to join us for lunch at the August meeting. At that time, Scholarship Committee Chair Barb Meek will present Kimberly Barker, a graduate of Waterford High School, with a check for \$650.00 to help with her first year of college expenses. She plans to attend Capital University and major in elementary education.

KB

A word
about
how our
newsletter
works

Last month, we invited WCRTA members to offer differing opinions regarding Senate Bill 5. One of our members, Jane Crandall, took the time to do so. Her letter to the editor appears on the final page of this newsletter. We're always glad to hear from the membership and to present a different perspective on issues.

We don't have an established policy regarding letters because we have never needed one and probably don't need one now. If we are flooded with letters, and space becomes an issue, we may have to consider a policy.

WCRTA has a postal permit that enables us to send the newsletter for about one third of the cost of first class postage. Even though the annual fee for retaining the permit is almost \$200.00, it does save us some money since we send out about 250 newsletters six times a year and an occasional special mailing. The reduced rate means that our mailings are classified as third class material, which means that the post office can delay delivery.

Also, the post office does not forward third class mail, so if your address changes, you must notify us if you want to continue to receive the newsletter. You can do so via e-mail at the address below or send a note to WCRTA, 21200 State Route 676, Marietta, OH 45750.

jimwms14@suddenlink.net

JW

2011 Retirees

WCRTA wishes to congratulate the "Class of 2011." This year's retirees include the following educators, listed by district: **Belpre City Schools** (Robert Butler, Judy Huddleston); **Fort Frye Local** (Dennis Bahen, Kelly Biehl, Claire Bolden, Sylvia Chadwell, David Spearman, Lois Spencer, Patrick Taylor); **Marietta City** (Bill Bonar, Christine Ellsworth, Barb Jenkins, Donna Kern, Nancy Mahan, Linda Reynolds, Steve Schumm); **Warren Local** (Don Eichinger, Cheri Logan, David Schaad); **Wolf Creek Local** (Jerry Barnett, Sharon Farnsworth, Pam Lang, Jeanette Starkey); **Washington County Career Center** (Janis Sweigard).

As always, we apologize for any errors or omissions and will gladly print corrections in the September/October newsletter. Retirees will receive the newsletter through the end of 2011, at which time you are invited to join ORTA and WCRTA. The cost to belong to both organizations is \$40.00 per year. There is also a life membership available to ORTA. Current membership cost to belong to our local chapter is a very modest \$10.00 per year, which covers the cost of the newsletter, the postal permit, and web site hosting. Plus, \$4.00 of every membership goes directly to our scholarship fund, which allows us to help a recent high school graduate, typically one who plans to pursue a career in education. The membership of WCRTA invites you to give serious consideration to joining thousands of other retired educators in Ohio. ORTA's primary concern is the welfare of our retirees.

JW

This and That

Congratulations to Denny Biddinger, who retired from the Warren Local Schools. Denny was inducted into the Mid-Ohio Valley Sports Hall of Fame this year. He coached several different sports at Warren High School during his long career there.

The train club in Parkersburg is hosting another bus/train excursion the second Saturday in October. The group will travel by bus to Cumberland, MD, and then board the train for a scenic ride through the beautiful mountain countryside to Frostburg and back. Cost for the trip, which includes bus transportation, the train ride, and a box lunch, is \$93.00. If you would like more information, contact Eldon Young, whose phone number appears on the first page of our newsletter. Eldon was recently interviewed by WOUB Radio regarding the old Cincinnati Railroad. More information regarding the interview can be found at the web site of the Athens County Historical Society.

Don't forget to make a reservation for the August lunch meeting at the Lafayette. Our program this month will be primarily social, with a door prize drawing for a free lunch at the October meeting. It's always nice to see everyone at our meetings, and I'm looking forward to chatting with some of my "old" friends and perhaps meeting some new people too.

KB

In Memoriam

We have learned of the passing of several educators since our last newsletter. **Bernice "Bunny" Arnold** taught for many years in the Fort Frye District. She retired in 1990. **Connie Brant** was teaching at Washington State Community College when she passed away. Connie had taught in North Carolina and Ohio, and more recently at Parkersburg High School. **Patricia Joan Luzader** retired from the Belpre City Schools, where she had taught in the elementary grades. **Jane Crandall**, whose letter to the editor appears on the last page of the newsletter, retired from Marietta High School, where she had taught social studies. Mrs. Crandall was passionately interested in politics and civic affairs. The members of WCRTA extend sympathy to the families and friends of these Washington County educators.

We apologize, as always, for errors or omissions. If you know of a local educator whose name has been omitted from our brief tributes, please let us know. We will have the annual memorial service at the October luncheon. At that time, we read out the names of friends and acquaintances we have lost in the preceding year.

As we mentioned last time, we are going to have series of articles honoring favorite teachers in our 2012 newsletters. You are invited to consider writing a short piece to share with our membership.

"The whole art of teaching is only the art of awakening the natural curiosity of young minds for the purpose of satisfying it afterwards."

Anatole France (1844-1924)

KB & JW

Letter to the Editor

June 13, 2011

Ohio Senate Bill 5 was not designed to punish public employees who join unions, rather to allow many county & local governments and school districts the ability to deal with an impossible financial situation. Collective bargaining—workers joining together to negotiate wages and working conditions—was needed in the days of the industrial revolution. Workers could join together as one in dealing with large corporations instead of workers having to negotiate alone.

In 1936 Franklin D. Roosevelt noted in a letter to Luther C. Steward, President of the National Federation of Federal employees, “meticulous attention should be paid to the special relationships and obligations of public servants to the public itself and to the Government. ...The employer is the whole people who speak by means of laws enacted by their representatives in Congress. ...A strike by public employees manifests nothing less than an intent on their part to prevent or obstruct the operations of Government until their demands are satisfied.”

Calvin Coolidge, when Governor of Massachusetts, said, “There is no right to strike against the public safety by anybody, anywhere, anytime.”

Ohio Senator Shannon Jones from Ohio’s 7th District told the Youngstown Business Journal recently: “We cannot restore our economy and create jobs if we keep raising the tax burden on Ohioans, and the only way to get that under control is to limit the growth of government. Senate Bill 5 is an important step in that process.”

I, personally do not believe that public employees should be a part of Big Labor Organizations. The public will be better served.

Jane R. Crandall, Teacher
Marietta School System (Retired 1984)

We are sorry to report that Mrs. Crandall passed away July 13. As noted elsewhere in the newsletter, we extend our sympathy to her friends and family.

On Merit Pay

Recent legislation from Columbus will create a system of merit pay for Ohio’s teachers. I have always been in favor of the *idea* of merit pay and performance-based raises for educators. The problem with the idea, as good as it may sound at first, is that there is no way to create a program of merit pay that can be fairly and equitably applied. In an interview last week, Governor Kasich announced that he wants teachers to take the lead in developing the criteria and standards for merit pay. In my estimation, that is like the executioner offering the condemned prisoner the chance to carry out his own sentence. I was lucky to work for some good principals, and in spite of that fact, I am not convinced that even the best of them could have been objective when deciding who was deserving of pay increases and who was not. The business of teaching has too many variables to accommodate merit pay based primarily on test scores.

JW