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# Washington County Retired Teachers Association

*An Affiliate of the Ohio Retired Teachers Association*

## March 2011

"If we had not winter, the spring would not be so pleasant; if we did not sometimes taste of adversity, prosperity would not be so welcome."

Anna Vukovic 1612

An old saying claims that April showers bring May flowers. Here's a new adage, at least for us who live in river valleys: March showers bring high water. For now, at least, the floodwaters are receding with only limited damage and inconvenience. So, we'll have no trouble getting down to the Lafayette Hotel Wednesday, April 13, for our bi-monthly meeting at 12 sharp. The menu this time is apple-glazed loin of pork, mashed potatoes with gravy, broccoli and cauliflower, along with the usual accompaniments. There will also be carrot cake with ice cream for dessert. Price of the meal remains at \$13.00, which includes everything—not bad for a sit down meal with salad and dessert. Make a reservation by calling Joyce Ross at 373-2359. You can also make a reservation by e-mail at: [jross1007@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jross1007@sbcglobal.net)

The deadline to make a reservation is Sunday, April 10, by 8 P.M.

We had good attendance at the February meeting, and the food was even better than usual. Anna Vukovic, Director of Volunteer Services for the Marietta Memorial Health System, provided us with an overview of volunteer programs at Marietta Memorial. She talked about some of the opportunities to give a little of our time and talent back to the community. Everyone I know who has volunteered at MMH has found it to be worthwhile and rewarding. Anna also spoke briefly about her work with Ukrainian Easter eggs. For several years, Anna has offered classes in the design and creation of the beautiful eggs that represent an old tradition of Eastern Europe. She was even kind enough to bring one of her creations to offer as a door prize. We want to thank Anna for taking time to visit with us, but more importantly, we thank her and the hundreds of volunteers at the hospital(s) who give their time to make the world a little better.

**If you are interested in becoming a volunteer at Marietta Memorial, call 374-1779 to request an application. When Anna receives your application, she will invite you to come for an interview and will match your skills and interests to the hospital's needs.**

"Music has  
charms to  
soothe a  
savage breast...."  
Congreve

If you attended last April's lunch meeting at the Lafayette, you will recall that children from Phillips School in Marietta provided the entertainment. I'm happy to report that J.D. Benson, the music instructor at Phillips, has arranged to bring his students to this year's April luncheon. We want to thank Mr. Benson and his students for sharing their time and talents.

This may be a good place to insert a brief word about school budgets and budgets in general. When money is short, one of the first parts of the curriculum to suffer is the arts. Since only very limited offerings are required by the state in art and music (along with physical education), boards often have no choice but to try to save money by eliminating or reducing these programs.

I could present lengthy arguments about the importance of these programs in our schools, but I'll spare you that with only a word or two: Consider what would be lost if all of our schools were to offer only what is required as an arts curriculum by state standards. We should be ashamed if we sit by and watch that happen.

JW

## March MADness

For lots of folks, March Madness refers to the big college basketball tournament that fascinates millions of Americans and provides great entertainment. This March, though, Senate Bill 5 has caused me to be a different kind of "mad," as in downright furious. Those of us who taught school before collective bargaining legislation passed in 1983 can recall all too well what conditions were like. At Warren Local, for example, we were on strike or honored OAPSE's picket lines several times in the late 1970's and early '80's. Since 1983, the number of strikes by public employees in Ohio has declined dramatically. And this is just one example of the benefits of collective bargaining, which most of us have come to view as a basic right.

Supporters of Senate Bill 5, including our State Senator, Jimmie Stewart, would have us believe that this bill will help to balance the state budget. The problem with this assertion, however, is that there is absolutely no evidence to support the claim. States that prohibit collective bargaining by public employees are in the same financial mess, for the most part, that Ohio is in. It is not fair to punish Ohio's public employees because the current majority of politicians in Columbus have embraced an anti-union ideology. We encourage all our members to learn more about this issue and let your feelings be known.

### Need Help with Your Tax Returns?

The AARP Tax-Aide Program will offer free tax return preparation from 9:30 A.M. to 4 P.M. Mondays and Thursdays through April 14 at the Knights of Columbus Building on Franklin Street in Harmar. Taxpayers should bring a photo ID, social security information for all dependents, appropriate statements of 2010 income (W-2's and 1099's), along with last year's tax return forms if available. If you have questions, contact Bob Bumgarner, who generously volunteers his time and expertise.

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## This and That

In addition to the choir from Phillips School, who will entertain us at the April luncheon, Mr. Bruce Thomas, Superintendent of the Marietta City Schools, will speak BRIEFLY about the importance of the upcoming operating levy. Marietta voters will have an important decision to make in the May primary election. The outcome of this vote will determine much for the future of the city schools. There's an important election in the Warren District this spring as well. I expect I'm "preaching to the choir," as they say, but I urge you to vote in favor of these two ballot proposals. Nobody is all that eager to pay more taxes, but a relatively small sacrifice now can make a huge difference down the road.

In case you haven't heard, congratulations are in order to one of our members: Janet Kidd. Janet was honored by the local Chamber of Commerce as the 2010 Volunteer of the Year. She volunteers at her church and is involved in several civic and fraternal organizations. Janet is especially devoted to the work of the local food pantries. Our hat is off to Janet and to the dozens of other retired teachers who do volunteer work. This is one more example of the many contributions educators make to the community—even after they leave the classroom.

I see that gardening paraphernalia is appearing in the stores, encouraging me once again to try to grow some things. Master Gardener Jan Whitney hasn't given up on me yet. Together, we struggle with some pumpkins, a few tomatoes, and the porch pots. Maybe this will be the year of the bumper crop, and I'll be showing my flowers at the Washington County Fair. Somehow, I doubt it, but you never know. I hope the Easter Bunny is good to you this year; plus I'd like to see you at the Lafayette April 13 for a couple of hours of good food, fun, and fellowship.

KB

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## In Memoriam

We were sorry to learn of the passing of Charles Schoeppner, who had a long career in education. He grew up in Washington County and graduated from Lower Salem HS, where he was an outstanding athlete. Following his retirement from education, he returned home to live. When I joined WCRTA in 1999, he was very active in our local chapter and had served a term as president. Mr. Schoeppner was a gentleman of the old school.

Pat Smith Walner spent much of her life in service to others, especially to young people. In addition to teaching school and substituting, she was my grandson's Sunday school teacher at Christ United Methodist Church. The children called her "Mrs. Walnut." She was a great supporter of the arts, especially music; it was always a pleasure to talk with Pat. The local world of arts and letters lost a good friend in Pat Walner.

When Kay Cline and I were students at Harmar Elementary School, a few years back, Mary Jane Delano McInturf was teaching there. She taught fifth grade and helped with the music classes. She was a kind, good teacher, the sort who leaves a lasting impression. After Miss Delano married, she and her husband moved to northern Ohio, where she continued to teach until her retirement. My fond memories of "Miss Delano" remind me that the good things teachers do last for a long, long time.

We extend our sympathy to the families and friends of these retired educators. They will be missed. As always, we apologize for any omissions or inaccuracies.

*"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

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## THE NEW SEASON OF *SURVIVOR*

Have you heard about the next planned *Survivor* series? Three men and three women from the “real” world, people that have “real” jobs, will be dropped into a public school classroom for one entire school year. Each of these individuals will be given a copy of the local and state standards for curriculum and will be assigned a class of 25 to 30 students. Each class will include students with special needs. At least five will be learning disabled; two will have confirmed diagnoses of autism or related conditions; at least one will be labeled as “gifted”; two will speak only limited English; and two more will be designated as BD (behavior disorder).

Each of these new teachers will complete lesson plans a week in advance, with annotations and correlations to state and local learning objectives. In addition, the plans will include necessary modifications to accommodate the special needs of the students identified above. As part of their regular duties, the teachers will present meaningful lessons; handle misconduct; document attendance and write referrals; create and grade assignments and tests; make bulletin board displays; show skill with new technologies in the classroom; assign grades; communicate regularly with parents; and ensure that each student has met the benchmark learning standards for the appropriate grade level.

As part of the daily routine, the new teachers will monitor hallways between classes and supervise restroom activity as appropriate. They will also conduct the required fire drills, tornado drills, and lock down drills as prescribed by state and local codes. They will also attend workshops, faculty meetings, and district-wide in-service sessions as scheduled. In an effort to make certain that their students perform well on state proficiency tests, the teachers will offer before and after school tutoring sessions.

If one of the new teachers becomes ill or is having a bad day, s/he must not let it show for fear that it will have a demoralizing effect on the children or decrease their motivation. Any failing on the part of the students will be the responsibility of the teacher(s).

Lunch breaks will be limited to thirty minutes (unpaid), which includes the time required to walk to and from the staff workroom. Those assigned to cafeteria duty will have their lunch with the children. Teachers will be allowed to use the student restrooms, provided another *Survivor* contestant is available to supervise their class. Additional guidelines are available from local administrators.

In exchange for their year’s work each contestant will be paid \$34,680, the average starting wage for teachers with no experience in the U.S. The winner of this season of *Survivor* will be rehired on a second one-year contract.

The truth as I know it.... Karen Burton,  
with editorial assistance from Jim Williams