

Officers

President:

Jim Williams (373-7194)

Vice President:

Jo Ann Ingram (374-5001)

Secretary:

Sally Hale (749-3223)

Treasurer:

Becky Nolt (374-5083)

Past President:

Kay Cline (374-7121)

Committees

PR and Reservations:

Joyce Ross (373-2359)

Newsletter:

Karen Burton (373-3317)

Legislative:

Juanita Baker (373-9702)

Chaplain:

Jim Fernihough (374-7305)

Retirement Planning:

Barbara Thode (373-3728)

Scholarship:

Barb Meek (678-2990)

Membership:

Hugh Coffman (374-6718)

Eldon Young (678-8077)

Volunteers:

Bob Bumgarner (374-5103)

Hospitality:

Helen Drake (373-8513)

Washington County Retired Teachers Association

An Affiliate of the Ohio Retired Teachers Association

November 2010

“Heap on more wood!—the wind is chill;
But let it whistle as it will,
We’ll keep our Christmas merry still.”

Marmion, by Sir Walter Scott, 1771-1832

My goodness, my goodness, it’s Christmas again—a time, at least according to Ebenezer Scrooge, for finding ourselves a year older and not a bit richer. Mr. Scrooge’s observations may be accurate in so far as they go; but for me, this is a season of wonderful traditions, beautiful decorations and music, and terrific food. It’s also a time of the year when people tend to behave more charitably toward others. Late autumn invites us to reflect on the year that is about to end and the year ahead, hoping for good things in 2011. I’m ready to watch the holiday shows on TV, even the ones that air year after year. Finally, and most importantly, we mark the year’s end by celebrating the birth of Christ.

Another nice tradition for me is our WCRTA December luncheon at the Lafayette Hotel. It’s early this year—December 8. As always, we’ll have lunch at 12, followed by musical entertainment courtesy of Warren High School’s choirs, directed by Mary Nuzum. Since we wanted to get the newsletter in the mail before Thanksgiving, we don’t have the menu yet, but the food is always good, and the cost is pretty reasonable for a full sit-down meal: \$13.00. And that includes salad, bread, beverages, and a dessert. The hotel is always beautifully decorated, and Helen Drake’s decorations for our Christmas meeting are extra special. 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, December 5, by 8 P.M.

If you missed the October meeting, you missed some great comfort food (meat loaf and fixings). You also missed some really good musicians who call themselves “The Profs.” They kindly played while we had lunch, so the meeting ended a little earlier than usual. Thanks to Jo Ann Ingram for arranging for them to entertain us. Everyone enjoyed the music. As a way of finishing our round of celebrating retired educators from Washington County’s various school districts, we had one final door prize drawing for a free WCRTA lunch, won by Val Hoover.

Last
Chance
to
Save
\$10

As you know from the last newsletter, ORTA dues for 2011 will increase from \$20.00 to \$30.00. If you pay state dues on a yearly basis and wish to save \$10.00, you can pay your 2011 dues now. In order to take advantage of this one-time offer, you **MUST** complete the membership form you received in the last newsletter, and mail it to Becky Nolt no later than December 1. **If your dues payment is postmarked later than December 1, you will have to pay the higher rate.**

Full membership in our organization requires us to pay dues to ORTA and to WCRTA. Total dues for 2011 is \$30.00 if paid by December 1, and \$40.00 if paid after December 1. Becky will continue to accept dues as usual (normally through February), but to get the lower rate, fill out the membership form, write a check for \$30.00, payable to WCRTA, and mail it today. We will continue to include dues reminders in the newsletter, but the enclosed membership form is the only one you will receive. Please call Becky or Jim Williams with questions.

Officer Election

2010 is an election year for WCRTA officers. Our by-laws call for the immediate past president, Kay Cline, to prepare a slate of candidates for the December meeting. No provision is made for nominations from the floor, but there is nothing to prohibit nominations either. The president and vice president are limited to single terms. Other officers are permitted to continue in their positions.

As of November 8, when the executive committee met, the slate of officers to be presented in December is as follows:

President	Jo Ann Ingram
Vice President	Jim Williams*
Secretary	Sally Hale
Treasurer	Becky Nolt
Trustee	Becky Nolt**

Committee chairs serve at the discretion of the president. Following the election, the new president will appoint or re-appoint members to serve in those positions.

If you are interested in running for one of the positions listed above, please contact Kay Cline to have your name placed on a ballot for December. Officers must be members of both ORTA and WCRTA; associate members are not eligible to hold office.

*Editor's Note: I volunteered to serve another term as vice president, with the stipulation that I would withdraw my name from nomination if someone else is willing to serve. (JW)

**Juanita Baker has been serving as trustee and would have continued to serve through 2011; however, Juanita has been elected District VIII Director to replace Martha Sagan. This means that someone else must serve as WCRTA's trustee for 2011. After that, it is very unlikely that our chapter will have a trustee, due to a reduction in the number of trustees statewide. This change was a cost-saving measure that was approved by the elected leadership of ORTA.

This and That

Helen Drake is recuperating at home following her recent illness and making good progress. We are hoping that she can join us for lunch December 8. In Helen's absence, Marion Russell kindly filled in and took care of the decorations in October, with help from Val Hoover.

Eldon Young reports that some model railroading activities are coming up in the Belpre/Parkersburg area. Watch the newspapers for details. The train club in Parkersburg has a nice display in the basement of the Noe Office Supply building. It's a fun place to visit when they have their open houses.

Retirement Planning Meeting a Success


WCRTA sponsored a retirement planning meeting for Washington County educators Tuesday, October 19, at the Washington County Career Center. About thirty-five people attended and heard a presentation from an STRS counselor, who spoke about the many decisions and options that are a part of retirement planning. Based on evaluations and comments from participants, the event was deemed very beneficial to those contemplating retirement. In these somewhat uncertain times, people have lots of questions about what to expect from our retirement system.

Thanks to Barbara Thode for organizing this event, and thanks to all of you for helping by providing refreshments, donations, and time. We also want to thank Bob Crum and Stan and Sylvia Gage for attending the meeting to distribute information about financial planning. Both Bob and the Gages have expertise in financial/insurance issues that are specifically related to educators. We were honored to have with us also the Executive Director of ORTA, Ann Hanning. We want to thank Ms. Hanning for taking her time to drive down from Columbus to be with us for this event.

Medicare Plan D and Express Scripts

Retirees who receive benefits from STRS and are eligible for Medicare received information by mail explaining the new arrangement with Express Scripts and Medicare Part D. **Two parts of this letter are very important: 1. If you opt out of the Express Scripts Medicare Part D Plan, your STRS Ohio hospital medical coverage will end January 1, 2011. 2. If you enroll in an additional Medicare Part D Plan, your individual STRS hospital medical prescription coverage will be cancelled.**

If you have questions about your status in STRS-sponsored health care plans, you can call their member assistance number toll free at 888-227-7877. My experience with the people who work for us at STRS has always been positive. Please bear in mind that Medicare regulations require STRS to offer members the opportunity to decline coverage.



In Memoriam

We have learned of the passing of Nancy Gawthrop, who had taught in Wood County before coming to Marietta. Mrs. Gawthrop taught at North Hills School. Her son Jim graduated from MHS and still lives in Marietta.

Dorothy Elkins, Jackie Powell's sister, died in October. Dorothy came to our lunch meetings with Jackie and was such a nice lady. I enjoyed talking with her and am sure Jackie will miss her terribly. Dorothy had been a teacher also.

Ruth Good, who taught for many years at Barlow-Vincent Elementary and prior to that at Warren Elementary, died November 8 at age 90. I never knew Ruth to do or say an unkind thing. I worked with her for a long time, and she certainly gave her students a solid foundation in the English language. After she retired from B-V, she continued to substitute at various schools, including Warren HS. Ruth's favorite part of the day was lunchtime. She loved to eat—so much so in fact, that she didn't want to talk during the lunch break because conversation interfered with her food. Sometimes Ruth bought two school lunches. I ran into her in Big Bear one time several years ago, and Ruth had several gallon-size cartons of ice cream in her cart. The ice cream was on sale; plus she had some coupons. She told me I should buy some, too, because it was such a good deal. "But, Ruth," I said, "won't the ice cream get freezer burn before you can eat it all?" All Ruth said in reply was, "No."

KB

Jack Watkins taught for almost forty years, much of that time at Warren High School. He also taught classes for a long time at Washington Technical College and later at Washington State. Jack passed away November 4. Working with Jack was a lot of fun; he had a great sense of humor and loved practical jokes. When I first was teaching at Warren HS, Jack and I had a planning period together. He was one of the best storytellers I've ever known. Wit and geniality were hallmarks of Jack's character. He was a favorite among students and staff alike. I think that everyone who ever knew Jack Watkins can remember at least one funny story he told or one funny story about him. I have great memories of many good times with Jack. All of us who knew him will miss him.

JW

On behalf of the WCRTA, Karen and I extend our sympathy to the families and friends of these retired educators. As always, if we have omitted a name from these informal tributes, we apologize.

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