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Washington County Retired Teachers Association

An Affiliate of the Ohio Retired Teachers Association

July 2014

“And then the whining school-boy, with his satchel,
And shining morning face, creeping like snail
Unwillingly to school. *(As You Like It)*”

Hello, Fellow Educators,

I find it hard to believe that we're about to start another school year. It seems as if August 1960 was not so long ago, and I was eager and excited to begin my first teaching job. I thought I knew everything and could change the world. I quickly learned that I didn't and I couldn't. I also learned to rely on the experienced teachers I worked with for advice and help. I have seen many trends and “innovations” come and go in the world of education in the past 50+ years, but schools and teachers have survived, and thank Goodness for that. I often think we would be better off if legislators would leave the running of the schools to educators and just make sure there is enough money to do so. That's all from the soapbox (at least for now).

I've enjoyed the local produce this summer. I visit the stands and the Farmers Market often and get to see lots of people I know. If you've not made a trip to the fairgrounds on Saturday mornings for a while, this is a great time to go. Speaking of going and good things to eat and people to see, plan to attend our August 13 lunch meeting at the Lafayette Hotel at 12 noon. The menu calls for chicken cordon bleu, with side dishes, a salad, and a summer dessert. The cost of the meal is \$13.00, which includes everything but a gratuity. You can make a reservation by calling Joyce Ross at 373-2359, or by e-mail at: joycer1007@gmail.com.

Yolan Dennis, a candidate for the Ohio House of Representatives in this fall's election, will provide the program at our August meeting. Mrs. Dennis has requested that members come with questions about education.

Our charity this time is to bring items for a local backpack program. The group furnishes back-to-school items for children whose families can't afford to buy school supplies. We will also accept cash donations for the program.

The deadline for reservations is Sunday, August 10, by 8 P.M.

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The Class

of

2014

WCRTA congratulates these Washington County educators who retired in 2014: **Fort Frye** (Katherine Coppock, Teresa Griffith, Deborah Moles, Susan Rauch, and Amanda VonKennell); **Frontier** (Karla Coffman); **Marietta City** (Richard Anderson, Jean Caldwell, Chris Cavalier, Joe Finley, Terri Futrell, Craig Keaton, Mike Miller, Nancy Wells, and Wendy Wilson); **Warren Local** (Melissa Cogswell, Kathy Morrow, Jan Tanner, and Craig Woods); **Wolf Creek** (Debbie Simms and Howard Tornes).

We extend a special invitation to the “Class of 2014” to join us at one of our bi-monthly meetings at the Lafayette Hotel and to give consideration to joining ORTA and WCRTA. Look for membership forms in the September newsletter.

We hope that your retirement will be long, healthy, and very happy. Once again, congratulations.

2014 WCRTA Scholarship Recipient

This year’s winner of our local scholarship, in the amount of \$1,000.00, is Phillip Ellis. Phillip graduated from the Washington County Career Center and from Frontier High School this spring. He studied landscaping and turf management at the Career Center and was president of their chapter of the National Technical Honor Society and vice president of their FFA group.

In addition to playing the violin, Phillip participated in baseball, track, and football, and finished high school with a cumulative GPA of 3.7. He will attend West Virginia University this fall, where he plans to study forensic science and landscape architecture. Phillip will receive a check for \$1,000.00 at the conclusion of his first semester of college work.

Pre-Retirement Planning Event

Once again this fall, WCRTA will host a retirement planning meeting for all Washington County educators. The meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, October 14, at the Washington County Career Center at 4:30. The main speaker at the event will be a representative from STRS, who will provide an overview of retirement options. The program will focus on guidelines effective through June of 2015 and also on the new guidelines that go into effect July 1, 2015. The article on the following page highlights some of the changes that will affect Ohio educators retiring under the new guidelines. In addition to the STRS representative, we will have one or more financial planners with us to offer advice and answer questions. Thanks to Barbara Thode and Carolyn Barnes for putting this workshop together.

In Case You Missed It

The summer issue of the *ORTA Quarterly* had a nice article about WCRTA's own Hugh Coffman, saluting him for his "40 plus years of service and dedication to the community." As we mentioned in the May newsletter, Hugh was honored at the annual Agribusiness Planning and Analysis Banquet in early April.

Many changes will take place in STRS benefits on July 1, 2015, including these:

- continued increases in member contributions (currently 11 percent), eventually reaching 14 percent by July 2016;
- final average salary based on five years, rather than three years;
- benefit formula of 2.2 percent for all years of service;
- increases in age and years of service for full retirement.

Because of these changes, STRS and ORTA anticipate a large number of retirements during or at the end of the coming school year.

On a little brighter note, most of us who have been retired for a while received a cost of living adjustment (COLA) of 2 percent on July 1. Let's hope that the COLA will offset any increase in health care costs for the coming year.

In Memoriam

Ronald Deem, who passed away June, was the football coach at Williamstown High School in the late 1950's and early 1960's. He left there for a teaching and coaching job in northern Ohio. Mr. Deem later became a superintendent and retired from the Springfield Schools near Dayton. After retirement, he returned to the Marietta area. Many of his former students and players attended his memorial service.

We have also learned of the death of Marceline Schneider, who was from the Newport and Lawrence area. She began her career as a teacher at Stover School in 1953 (New Matamoras), where she taught home economics. She later worked as a nutritionist for several companies. Miss Schneider died in February of this year.

We extend sympathy to the families and friends of these educators; and as always, we apologize for any errors or omissions.

***The truth as I know it.... Karen Burton
(with editorial assistance from Jim Williams)***
