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### Membership:

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# Washington County Retired Teachers Association

*An Affiliate of the Ohio Retired Teachers Association*

## May 2014

"If we were meant to talk more than listen,  
we would have two mouths and one ear."

*Mark Twain*

Hello, Teachers,

I'm writing this in May, during "Blackberry Winter." I learned this term for a cold snap in May when I was in college in Kentucky. My grandmother and lots of other people didn't plant much of anything before May 15, but I never heard them talk about "Blackberry Winter." The weather channel seems to think that the dipping jet stream may cause us to have a cooler than usual summer. That doesn't break my heart. Stacy's have moved their strawberry patch from Oak Grove to the former state tree nursery property in Reno, near the old Remington Rand plant. I hate driving on the Pike, but I can do it for strawberries.

We are in the waning days of the school year, and we'll soon have some new retirees to invite to join WCRTA. If you know anyone who is retiring this year, please invite him or her to join us, and be sure to emphasize how important ORTA is in watching out for the interests of STRS retirees.

Our June luncheon plans are a little different from the usual. Instead of meeting on the second Wednesday, we will meet on the third Wednesday, June 18. We will still be at the Lafayette Hotel, but we'll be eating in the Gun Room instead of in the meeting room near the parking lot. Plan now to attend the WCRTA luncheon at 12 noon on Wednesday **June 18**. The menu is stuffed chicken breast with mashed potatoes and green beans, plus a garden salad, rolls, and beverage. Dessert this time is strawberry pie. Perfect. The price is \$13.00, which does not include a gratuity.

Nancy Matheny from the O'Neill Senior Center will be there to tell us about trips, activities and other programs available to local seniors. She will also demonstrate Zumba and may invite some of us to join in. I'm not sure that would suit me, but I am curious to see what Zumba actually is. Make a reservation by calling Joyce Ross at 373-2359. You can also make a reservation by e-mail at: [joycer1007@gmail.com](mailto:joycer1007@gmail.com).

**The deadline for reservations is Sunday, June 15, by 8 P.M.**

**KB**

# Change of Date

The Ohio Mayors' Conference is meeting at the Lafayette Hotel the week of June 9-13, and the group will need all available space for the event. Our June meeting, therefore, will be one week later than usual, on Wednesday, June 18. In addition to the change of date, **we will be meeting in the Gun Room Restaurant**, as opposed to the banquet room where we usually have our meeting. The Gun Room is the hotel's principal restaurant, which most of you likely know. For ease of access, you may want to park on the side of the hotel nearer the river because there is a ramp on that side, and that entrance is actually closer to the Gun Room.

## **This and That**

### **Hugh Coffman Honored by WCCC**

The Adult Technical Training program at the Washington County Career Center recently recognized Hugh Coffman's 40 plus years of service and dedication to the community. Hugh received the award at the 37<sup>th</sup> annual AgriBusiness Planning and Analysis Banquet held on April 3. Congratulations to Hugh!

### **Pre-Retirement Planning Meeting**

WCRTA will host another planning seminar this fall for county educators who want to learn more about STRS options and benefits. As you may know, June 30, 2015, is an important date for Ohio's teachers. That is the last day to retire under the "old" rules, with the new rules taking effect July 1. If you want to learn more about the many, many changes affecting future retirees, you can find that information at the STRS website. In a word, those of us able to retire with 35 years of service credit between 1990 and mid-2015 are very, very fortunate. In fact, all of us who receive the benefits of being fully vested in Ohio's STRS are fortunate.

### **STRS Insurance Subsidy to Decrease for 2015**

In a continuation of measures passed by the STRS Board in 2011, retirees' share of the total cost of health insurance premiums will increase once again by 3 percent for plan year 2015, from 31 to 34 percent. Other changes will affect how much we pay for our coverage and for services. We urge you to stay informed and to read insurance information from STRS very carefully to select the best and most affordable plans available. Even though most of us will be paying more for our insurance, I'm thankful we have it.

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## **This and That (Continued)**

The WCRTA Scholarship Committee will announce and introduce the 2014 winner of our annual scholarship of \$1,000. The committee voted last year to delay payment of the scholarship award until the end of the recipient's first successful semester in college. Our community service project for June will be to donate to the WCRTA Scholarship Fund for 2015. Even though \$4.00 of each member's dues goes toward the fund, those contributions don't add up to \$1,000 every year. If you are not able to attend the June meeting and would like to contribute, please send a check to Becky Nolt at 107 Iroquois Drive (D3), Marietta, OH 45750.

Please remember to keep track of your volunteer hours. We were able to submit many hundreds of hours to the state for 2013. Bob Bumgarner, who takes care of this project for WCRTA, thinks that if all of us were to turn in our volunteer hours, we would have a chance to be tops in the state!

We had good attendance at our April meeting, and everyone enjoyed the performance by Marietta High School's Vocal Point. Thanks to Directors J.D. Benson and Liz Thacker for the entertainment.

### **In Memoriam**

**Randalyn ("Randy") Buckton** taught home economics at Frontier High School when the program was still called Home Ec. We were sorry to learn of her untimely passing on April 30.

**Stella Davis** taught school for a time, but left teaching to care for her home and children. Her husband Claude was a long-time Washington County educator. He had served as principal at Washington School in Marietta and also worked for the County Board. Mr. and Mrs. Davis were both very fine people.

**Jim Pugh** was a year ahead of me in school. When he was a senior, he was the quarterback for the Marietta Tiger football team. He went on to teach and coach football at MHS. Later, he moved to Florida and finished his teaching career there. He had been in poor health for the past several years, battling Parkinson's disease. Some of you may be acquainted with his brother Bob, who taught at Fort Frye.

We extend sympathy to the family and friends of these Washington County educators, and as always, we apologize for errors or omissions and will gladly make an effort to correct any that are pointed out.

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

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