

# Washington County Retired Teachers Association

*An Affiliate of the Ohio Retired Teachers Association*

## November 2016

**“The two most joyous times of the year are Christmas morning  
and the end of school.”** Alice Cooper

I write today with a heavy heart. As many of you know, our Editor Karen Burton died November 3 at Riverside Hospital in Columbus. Following her retirement from Barlow-Vincent Elementary in 1999, Karen joined WCRTA and took over the newsletter when “Yours truly” Margaret Brown decided to give up the task. When I retired in 2005, I volunteered to serve as editor of the newsletter, and even though I tried to resign from the job earlier this year, I have not yet accomplished that; but my feeling now is that this will be my last newsletter, at least until I retire from full-time work in a year or two.

**Change of Date Alert: Because of a scheduling conflict, the next meeting of WCRTA is Wednesday, December 7, at 12 noon at the Lafayette Hotel, one week earlier than our usual date. The menu is traditional holiday fare: turkey and dressing, mashed potatoes with gravy, mixed vegetables, and the customary salad and beverage. The dessert this time is caramel pear torte, which sounds pretty good to me. The cost of the meal is \$13.00, which includes everything but a gratuity. You can make a reservation by calling Joyce Ross (373-2359), or by e-mail at: [joycer1007@gmail.com](mailto:joycer1007@gmail.com).**

At the October meeting, WCRTA held its annual memorial service to remember colleagues who have passed away during the preceding year. Thanks to Jim Fernihough, Hugh Coffman, and Eldon Young for their work in preparing for the service. Those who attended also got to hear a musical group from the Cuter area called the “Dulcimer Ladies.” Thanks to them as well. The program for December hasn’t changed since the early 1980’s (?). Choirs from Warren High School will perform following our meal and fellowship. Under the direction of Mary Nuzum, the handbell choir and the A Cappella group always give an outstanding performance.

At each of our lunch meetings, we collect donations for a local charity. In keeping with past practice, the charity for December is the local unit of the Salvation Army, an organization with an excellent record of service. A very high proportion of donations go to people who need help, with a minimum of the funds used for administrative costs.

**The deadline for reservations is Sunday, December 4, by 8 P.M.**

## Officers

### President:

Juanita Baker (373-9702)

### Vice President:

Bonnie Weber (678-2844)

### Secretary:

Sally Hale (749-3223)

### Treasurer:

Becky Nolt (374-5083)

### Past President:

Jo Ann Ingram (374-5001)

## Committees

### PR and Reservations:

Joyce Ross (373-2359)

### Newsletter:

Open

### Legislative:

Juanita Baker (373-9702)

### Chaplain:

Jim Fernihough (374-7305)

### Retirement Planning:

Barbara Thode (373-3728)

### Scholarship:

Barb Meek (445-5094)

### Membership:

Hugh Coffman (374-6718)

Eldon Young (678-8077)

### Volunteers:

Bob Bumgarner (374-5103)

**Note: Please mail dues or  
other correspondence to**

**Becky Nolt at 107 Iroquois  
Drive, Marietta, OH 45750.**

Pay  
your  
dues  
today!

In the September/October newsletter, you received the 2017 membership form. If you haven't joined ORTA and WCRTA, please take a minute today to complete the form and return it to Treasurer Becky Nolt at 107 Iroquois Drive, Marietta, OH 45750. The cost of local dues is only \$10.00, and \$4.00 of every membership goes directly to the Scholarship Fund.

ORTA is an advocate for Ohio's retired teachers. For the most part, the organization is non-partisan, which can be a significant advantage during this time when our country is more and more polarized. ORTA's efforts on our behalf make an important difference in Columbus, and maintaining a strong membership in our local chapter is critical because we know that there is strength in numbers. If you are currently a member, please renew; if you have not joined the organization yet, please consider it.

### **Pre-Retirement Planning Event**

WCRTA sponsored a retirement planning seminar on Tuesday, October 18, at the Washington County Career Center. About twenty county educators attended the meeting and enjoyed refreshments and a short talk by Warren Local Retirees Jay and Kim Henry. The principal speaker was a retirement planning specialist from STRS, who gave an overview of options available to Ohio educators through our retirement system. Local financial planners Bob Crum and Stan and Sylvia Gage joined in the question/answer session following the presentation. This biennial event is one of WCRTA's important service projects for local teachers. Thanks to Barbara Thode and Carolyn Barnes for organizing the meeting, and thanks to the members who donated refreshments, door prizes, or money to help out.

### **This and That**

Treasurer Becky Nolt had a knee surgery earlier this fall and did some rehab and therapy at Harmar Place. Unfortunately, after she went home, she did not improve as expected, and her doctors discovered a fracture behind the knee repair work, which resulted in an additional surgery, more therapy, and another stay at Harmar Place. She is doing much better now and hopes to be home by Thanksgiving.

We haven't often ventured into politics in this publication, but I thought I would share an observation based on the first time I voted in a Presidential election. In 1972, incumbent President Richard Nixon was opposed by the Democratic nominee George McGovern. Mr. Nixon received 520 electoral votes, and Mr. McGovern received 17, winning only the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the District of Columbia. Less than two years later, Mr. Nixon resigned from office because of the Watergate scandal. The year before his resignation, his Vice President (Spiro Agnew) had resigned in the face of being charged with bribery, conspiracy, and tax fraud. The odd thing about that unfortunate turn of events in our history is that by the end of 1974, you couldn't find anyone, with the possible exception of Mrs. Nixon, who had voted for either of them. From that experience and from having voted in ten subsequent Presidential elections, I have learned to be somewhat philosophical about these things. My current record stands at 5-6 so I'm batting .455, which would be pretty good in baseball. Maybe next time, I'll get back to even. In any case, I have faith in the American system and would urge each of you to pray for the nation and her leaders, regardless of how you may feel about them.

## In Memoriam

With help from Hugh Coffman and Jim Fernihough, Karen and I have tried over the past ten years to include in our newsletters a notice of the passing of area educators and of other friends of WCRTA. During that time, we have no doubt failed to include individuals who should have been mentioned, and for that, I am sorry. The list of those honored at our 2016 memorial service on October 12 appears on the back of this page and is also posted on the WCRTA website ([www.wcrta.com](http://www.wcrta.com)). Many thanks to Jay Henry for maintaining the site and for his faithful posting and updating.

Since the September edition, we have learned of the October 4 passing of Chuck Beardmore, who worked at Waterford HS for 26 years, serving the school as principal for 16 of those years. After retirement in Ohio, Mr. Beardmore and his wife moved to Arizona, where Chuck taught for five additional years. In the spirit of volunteering that is a hallmark of the retired teacher, Chuck and his wife Mary Jane worked for seven summers at two of our country's premier national parks, Yellowstone and Mr. Rainier.

More recently, John Van Reeth, who had taught in the Wolf Creek Local Schools and also in the Southern and Meigs Local Districts, passed away on November 10. John's musical talent went beyond the classroom. At Ohio University, he was a member of the Marching Men of Ohio; and throughout his life, he performed with barbershop quartets, church choirs, and community bands.

Karen (McCurdy) Burton spent most of her career in education at Barlow-Vincent Elementary School teaching first grade. One of Karen's greatest gifts was the ability to tell a good story, and she had thousands of them to tell. In the process of teaching little children, she acquired wisdom and used kindness, love, and sometimes humor to help them learn the basics, especially of reading. Karen often said that in first grade, everything else was of secondary importance. Following her retirement, Karen volunteered through her church and other organizations in service to others. She was actively involved in the founding of the Gilman After School Program seventeen years ago and volunteered there for 16 years. For the past several years, Karen served as a member of the Board of Education of the Marietta City Schools and was still on the board at the time of her death. Optimistic to the end, Karen managed somehow to attend the Marietta board meeting on October 24 and was beginning to plan for the holiday season and the New Year. Sadly, those plans were not to be fulfilled.

Karen and I got acquainted on the picket line during the Warren Local teachers' strike in 1980, became friends, and have remained friends since then. Knowing Karen has been one of the great good fortunes of my life, and her death one of its great misfortunes. Karen was always a good sport and was able to see humor, even in adversity, so let me close with an observation from Garrison Keillor: "They say such nice things about people at their funerals that it makes me sad to realize that I'm going to miss mine by just a few days."

This is the fourth year of what I've called my "Comeback Tour," which I'm hoping will last another year or two. After I leave my teaching position at Caldwell HS, I will perhaps volunteer to work on the newsletter again, but for now, I'll say (as the French do) *au revoir*, as opposed to good-bye. May God bless you and yours this holiday season and in the year to come.

*Jim Williams*

Washington County Retired Teachers Association  
Memorial Service October 2016

Susie Heiner	9/18/15
Nancy Schornstheimer	10/10/15
Ruth Gerhold	10/19/15
Ronald Neely	10/31/15
Carol Holland	11/01/15
Orval Cottrell	11/09/15
Addie Fields	11/11/15
Michael Popp III	11/25/15
Phillip Hawn	11/28/15
Barbara Beittel	12/02/15
Chet Pifer	12/08/15
Janet Fogle Mckim	1/18/16
Dennis Ullman	1/20/16
Gary Stutler	2/05/16
Sally Miller	3/06/16
John Lazear	4/03/16
Amy Shields	4/12/16
Michael J. Hart	4/30/16
Coy Hinkle	5/04/16
Wayne Yearwood	5/06/16
Bill Ormiston	5/20/16
William Berentz	6/12/16
Marilyn Elston	7/17/16
Phyllis Sims	7/19/16
Simon Rechedy	7/28/16
Sandra Rowell	8/01/16
Charles Beardmore	10/04/16

*Requiescat in pace.*