



Tennessee Retired Teachers' Association
an NEA-Retired affiliate

Bulletin

Issue 2 February 2020

Tennessee Retired Teachers' Association "Advocates for Retired Educators and Education" Since 1957

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TRTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT RON PENDERGRASS

Myths and reality of why people join organizations

Research says that people join for various reasons. Some join to reduce the feeling of standing alone. Some join because they perceive membership as status. Many join because membership fulfills social needs and regular interaction with friends. Finally, people join to achieve some goal that requires more than one person.

For more than 40 years I have heard three myths concerning why people join our organization.

1. Members Join for Our Benefits. Sometimes members join to gain access to a benefit, but rarely. Much more often the average member cannot name a single benefit if they tried.

#2. Members Join for the Value. This may be the reason some people join, but overwhelmingly members do not join for the value. This does not mean value is unimportant. While people do not generally join for the value, they stay for the value.

#3. Members Join because the Association is the Leading Authority. Our association is 63 years old and is the voice of retired teacher but people do not join for this reason either.

So why do people join? The number one reason is because someone said I should join.

Over and over members indicate that some peer prompted them to join. A friend invited them to a chapter meeting. Someone they respect is a member of the association so they figured if that person thought the association was worth the time and money, they would find membership worthwhile too. I would estimate that 85% of the people that I ask why they joined, it is because someone said they should. This means the most important thing is to make current members feel good about the association, because members who feel good about the association will recruit more members. Membership is everyone's responsibility.

Remember if we have pride in the organization, if we are proactive in defending the profession and the organization and if we plan appropriately we will meet the needs of our members and prospective members. I challenge you to recruit a friend.

Thanks for all you do.



Executive Director's Column: DONNA COTNER

As we begin a new year and a new decade, I want to express my sincere appreciation to each of you for your membership in the Tennessee Retired Teachers Association. TRTA is the vehicle through which we address the economic, social and professional interests of retired teachers. Additionally, I want to give special recognition to the legion of volunteers who serve as officers, board members, committee members/ chairpersons, promoters of membership recruitment/retention and other advocate positions. Your work on the local, state and national level are the impetus for change that enhance the quality of life for all retired teachers...a tremendous "thank you" for showing up, speaking out and working for our shared goals!

The month of January was named for the god Janus who had two heads-one to look at the past and one to look to the future. Let us take a moment to look at TRTA's sixty-two- year history. TRTA was instrumental in combining various retirement systems in the state and the formation of the Tennessee Consolidated Retirement System (TCRS). Since its formation, TCRS has been fiscally sound and is recognized nationally for its being actuarially sound and well managed. Retirement benefits have been enhanced by allowing accumulated sick leave to count toward retirement credit, restricted military service counts toward retirement credit, and the inclusion of compound cost-of-living increases based on the consumer price index. TRTA works with the TN Legislature for funding to support these and other initiatives. Retired teachers who are on Medicare can purchase Medicare Supplement Insurance (Medigap) through the State of Tennessee Insurance Plan which is administered by POMCO. The premium is reduced for certain intervals of experience for teaching in Tennessee Public Schools. There is reduced-tuition discount at public institutions of higher learning for children/grandchildren dependents of retired teachers. TRTA lobbies for all these benefits which require funding by the Tennessee Legislature on an annual basis. Looking to the future, TRTA will continue to work to maintain and enhance the current benefits for retired teachers through lobbying and working with various governmental entities.

On a national level, TRTA works with and supports NEA-R in addressing issues critical to retired teachers. This includes legislation that requires Medicare to negotiate lower prices and caps annual out-of-pocket spending for Medicare beneficiaries. The savings from these provisions should be used to expand Medicare coverage to include hearing, dental and vision. "Lower Drug Prices Act, HR#3 passed the House and is pending in the Senate.

Alert: Senate Bill S.2733 misleadingly called the "TRUST ACT" would create a panel that would meet **outside of public view and create "fast track" plans** to make changes in Social Security and Medicare. This bill must be stopped!

Social Security and Medicare benefits are critical to all Americans. National reports on retirement security revealed the following startling statistics:

- ◆ 40.2% of Older Americans rely solely on Social Security for retirement income
- ◆ Only 6.8 % of retirees have income from three sources: Social Security, Pension and Savings Social Security kept more that 7.5 million households out of poverty, reduced public assistance costs by \$10 Billion
- ◆ Pensions kept nearly one million retirees out of poverty. Reduced public assistance costs by \$4 billion.

The conclusion drawn from the reports is that Social Security has a pivotal role to play in preventing poverty in the elderly.

Our history as retired teachers was built on the dedication and efforts of former retirees working on a local, state and national level. Let us be good stewards of our legacy and provide for current and future retirees through a sound and effective TRTA!

Shaping the Future of Federal Funding through the 2020 Census

The Federal Government will distribute billions of dollars during the next ten years based on a single factor...the results of the 2020 Census. This census is critical for funding schools and supporting students and educators as the results will determine the moneys schools receive each year for the next ten years for salaries for teachers in federally funded positions, special education, Head Start, teacher training, technology for the classroom, after school programs, school lunch assistance and more. Additionally, funding for community services that influence children's readiness for learning such as nutrition and health programs will be affected. Unfortunately, children under the age of five are difficult to count for several reasons. The Census Bureau estimated that one million children in this age bracket were not counted in the 2010 census and these funds were not distributed equitably for the decade.

The Census Bureau needs workers for this endeavor! Workers will be paid an hourly rate based on the county of residence and reimbursed for mileage. The online job application can be completed at www.2020census.gov/jobs. This is an opportunity for you to earn additional income as you set your own work schedule. Help shape the future by working to assure an accurate and complete count in the 2020 Census.

RALLY FOR OUR SCHOOLS: March 16, 2020



Tennessee is known as a national leader in K-12 improvement.

Tennessee ranks 45th for funding per student; we are behind all states in the South except Mississippi.

Tennessee teachers spend on average \$500 per year from their own pockets for classroom supplies. Tennessee gets the most value for

every education dollar as TN is at the national average in 4th and 8th grade math and reading scores, top-half of states for average ACT scores of the 20 states that require ACT, rank 8th for on-time graduation and 5th nationally for black students.

Tennessee schools accomplish national level outcomes; we deserve national level funding!

Come to Nashville on Monday, March 16 NOON, and join with TEA and other supporters of Public Education to convince Legislators of the seriousness of the funding crisis and the wide-based support for increasing funding for public education!

To register for the Rally, text "RALLY" to 84693 or to register on-line go to www.teateachers.org/rally; scroll down below the map and complete the contact information; under "additional information ..." am click "retired educator" then click "RSVP TODAY" to send your registration.

Please join the Rally and Stand for Public Education. It's Affordable. It's Right. It's Time to fund TN Schools!

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

March 2020

- 9 WTN regional workshop First Baptist Jackson TN
- 16 MTN regional workshop TEA Building Nashville TN
- 23 ETN regional workshop Fountain City UMC Knoxville

April 2020

- 1 Deadline to report change in 2020-21 local dues to TRTA
- 2 Deadline to submit New Business Items for TRTA RA
- 3 TRTA RA delegate allocation numbers mailed to Presidents

May 2020

- 1 Deadline to submit Necrology reports to TRTA
- 8 Deadline to submit TRTA RA delegate names

June 2020

- 9 TRTA RA Embassy Suites, Murfreesboro, TN
- 2-10 NEA-Retired & NEA Representative Assemblies
- 30 **Deadline to submit Local Officers and Committee Chairs for 2020-21**

July 2020

- 31 Deadline to submit to TRTA 2020-21
 - Marked Membership Rosters
 - New Member forms
 - Drop List
 - Payments

VOTING: A RIGHT AND A RESPONSIBILITY

In 1919 Congress approved the suffrage amendment to the U.S. Constitution, granting women the right to vote. Congress then sent the amendment to the states for ratification; this would require a positive vote by three-fourths of the 48 states. Tennessee Governor Albert H. Rhodes called a special session of the state Legislature for August 1920. Due to ratification votes in other states, by August 1, the debate over the right of women to vote in the November 1920 elections would be determined by the Tennessee Legislators. The resolution passed the Senate and went to the House leading to what was called the "War of the Roses". On August 18, by a single vote by the youngest member of the House, Harry Burn of McMinn County, the resolution passed. The Nineteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution became effective on August 26, 1920, and Tennessee is celebrating the one-hundredth anniversary of this vote this year! This was a hard-won victory ---won by determination over several decades of commitment, work and sacrifice!

Voting is a privilege and civic responsibility. Make your voice heard by voting in the upcoming elections as outlined below:

**GET OUT THE VOTE:
KEY DATES FOR THE 2020 ELECTION CYCLE**

Tuesday, March 3, 2020 Super Tuesday Presidential Primary and State/County Primary

- Voter Registration Deadline Monday, February 3, 2020
- Early Voting Period Wednesday, February 12-Tuesday, February 25, 2020
- Absentee Ballot Request Deadline Tuesday, February 25, 2020

Thursday, August 6, 2020

- Voter Registration Deadline Tuesday, July 7, 2020
- Early Voting Period Friday, July 17-Saturday, August 1, 2020
- Absentee Ballot Request Deadline Thursday, July 30, 2020

Tuesday, November 3, 2020 State/Federal General Elections

- Qualifying Deadline Thursday, April 2, 2020 12:00 noon (For offices on August Ballot)
- Voter Registration Deadline Monday, October 5, 2020
- Early Voting Period Wednesday, October 14-Thursday, October 29, 2020
- Absentee Ballot Request Deadline Tuesday, October 27, 2020

These dates are for state and federal elections. Check with your local election commission for dates for local elections.



Tennessee Retired Teachers Association
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Nashville, TN 37201-1099

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Notice of Change of Address

Please complete, clip and mail to: TRTA, 801 Second Avenue North, Nashville TN 37201-1099

Old Address:

Name _____

Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

New Address: YOUR COUNTY: _____

Name _____

Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (____) _____ Home Email _____