

Retirement Times

President's Message

Happy New Year! 2020 was a challenging year in so many respects. Covid-19 pandemic has kept us away from family and friends. We've sanitized, masked, distanced, and zoomed. We haven't been able to meet for our KCRTA luncheons since January 2020. Unfortunately, our January 2021 luncheon is cancelled out of an abundance of caution. It's difficult to say when we will be able to gather again but when we do, we'll have a big celebration! The pandemic has not changed our support of public education. Our colleagues in the classrooms today whether virtual or in-person deserve our thanks and support. The KCRTA Legislative Committee has been in contact with each state representative and senator prior to the beginning of the legislative session. Many thanks to Jane Skinner and Valerie Biberdorf for your hard work and dedication to ensuring our legislators are aware of the priorities for retired teachers as well as those currently serving. Our children deserve nothing less.

Libby Burney, President
knoxretiredteachers@gmail.com, burneylib@comcast.net, (865) 584-4875

Legislative

We (Valerie Biberdorf, Libby Burney, Jane Skinner and various public school advocates) met with all the TN Legislators residing in Knox County (Sen Dr Richard Briggs, Sen Becky Massey, Eddie Mannis, Michele Carringer, Gloria Johnson, Sam McKenzie, Dave Wright, Jason Zachary, and Justin Lafferty) during the month of December using the Zoom platform. The primary purpose of these meetings was to establish friendly, trusting and personal relationships with each of them. We asked them personal and professional questions focusing on getting to know and understand them better. Our hope was to establish a great working relationship with them so they will listen and respond to our needs, questions and concerns and that they might in-turn reach out to us when they have educational questions. This was such a great learning experience, not only did we really get to know each of them better but they educated us on how the legislative process works. We thanked them for our pension, COLA, and for looking after retired teachers' needs. We were assured that TN has the 3rd best pension plan in the country and that it is safe because we have one of the best state treasurers in the country. The contact information will be included on in insert in your Newsletter as well as a brief summary of each of the three new representatives.

Membership

Your membership gives us a stronger voice when we talk to Legislators regarding retirement issues, especially concerning our COLA and insurance. Special thanks to those who are on payroll Deduction, this way you never have to remember to send a check. Your dues simply come out of your TCRS check each month.

Attention

KCRTA needs your help! We need a President-Elect. The President-Elect serves as our program chairman and will move into the President position in 2022.

KCRTA Scholarship Foundation News

If you would like to make a donation, in honor or memory of a retired teacher or make a 1500.00 dollar donation to honor a teacher call Lexa Hooten at 865-300-5570. Thank again for your continued support of the KCRTA Scholarship Foundation.

KCRTA accepts tax deductible gifts to support the organizations cause

- (1) in memory of someone who has died
- (2) in honor of a special occasion such as a birthday, anniversary, graduation,
- (3) simply as a donation to the scholarship.

Special thanks to all who made the Scholarship Ceremony a HUGE success!



KCRTA Officers and Committee Chairs

President:

Libby Burney

President-Elect:

TBA

Past President:

Don Loy

Secretary:

Glenda Childress

Community Relations:

Margaret Willis

Hosting Chair:

Lu Jones

Information & Protective
Services:

Pam Chipley

Legislative Chair:

Jane Skinner

Membership:

Jeanette Casteel,

Chris Vandergriff

Newsletter Editor:

Leslie Casteel

Parliamentarian:

Mike Blakenship

Scholarship Foundation Rep.:

Lexa Hooten

Web Page Chairman:

Chris Vandergriff

Executive Secretary /
Treasurer:

David Huntsinger

Calendar

Be sure to mark your calendar for the following dates of the Knox County Retired Teachers Association meetings:

- January 28, 2021
Canceled - COVID-19
- March 25, 2021
TBA
- May 27, 2021
TBA

Meetings are usually held on the fourth Thursday of alternate months at 11:15. The Executive Board meets at 9:30 am. All members are welcome to attend. November is the third Thursday.

Quote of the Month:

"Let your smile change the world, but don't let the world change your smile."

Anonymous

Any change of address, email address, or phone number should be sent to KCRTA, 711 Hall of Fame Drive, Knoxville, TN 37917 or to Chris.vandergriff@gmail.com

A hardcopy of *Retirement Times* is available upon request.

Community and Protective Services

Have you become the family therapist? It takes 8 to 12 years of intense studying, training and certification to become a clinical psychologist. You probably don't have any of that. And yet many of us found ourselves in the role of family therapist. Here are some common mistakes we make when playing family therapist, as well as ways to offer support.

Mistake 1: Talking too much

People need to be listened to and feel heard, not to be told how they should feel or how they should solve the problems. Listen more than you speak.

Mistake 2: Launching into "fix" mode

When someone is coming to you because they are struggling, of course you want to help. Ask permission to work together.

Mistake 3: Talking over the phone

When you ask a question over the phone and the person doesn't respond, you can't tell what's happening. Get together, if you can do so safely, or at least talk on a video call.

Mistake 4: Trying to fill silence

Silence feels uncomfortable which may lead you to respond to quickly. Instead give space for contemplation. Listening isn't the same as being passive. Saying I hear you, repeating back their words shows them you were listening.

Mistake 5: Judging your reality

Saying things such as "you shouldn't feel that way" or "cheer up, things could be worse" or "look on the bright side." Instead accept them where they are. Validate their reality even if it isn't yours.

Based on AARP Bulletin, Nov 2020, "When You Become the Family Therapist"

Scholarship Donations

IN MEMORY OF

Wright W. Frost
Reuben Hunter
Norma Robertson
Anna Pettit Russell

S.L. Valentine

David Wetzel
Elandria Williams

IN HONOR OF

Sonja Armstrong
LeRoyce Beatty
Pat Hunter
Edythe McNabb
Joyce Riddle
Sheryl Sallie
Sylvia Upton

DONATION

Cindy Ammons
Deloris Maddox
Cosette Parker

Sam Bratton
Margaret McGinnis

GIVEN BY

Tom Underwood
Elaine Ralston
Charles Davenport / Sylvia Walker
Shannondale Retired Teachers
c/o Shirley Lawson

Martha Hill
David Huntsinger
Dan Williams
Nellean Bragg
Terry & Marsh Useton
Elnora Williams

GIVEN BY

Donna Hardy
Donna Hardy
Elaine Ralston
Charles Davenport / Sylvia Walker
Donna Hardy
Donna Hardy
Margaret Willis

GIVEN BY

Gussie Cherry, Glenda Childress, Dr. Kim Hawkins, Kay Williams, Sallie Young

Necrology

Linda Burkhart
Wanda Moody