

Retirement Times



President's Message

I began my tenure as president of KCRTA in July 2020. No problem, they said! It will be fun, they said! Little did we know that Covid would come knocking on our door in just a matter of months. By March of 2022, we were forced to cancel luncheons and learn more than we ever wanted to know about zoom meetings. For the next two years, we had limited involvement with our scholarship luncheons. Masks, social distancing, and vaccines were front and center. Attendance at our luncheons and membership in the association also suffered. It seems like Covid is almost in the rear view mirror. Almost! Things are slowly returning to normal. I've heard the term "new normal". Let's embrace the "new normal" and fill the tables at our luncheons again. Let's increase our membership again. Membership here in Knox County and across the state makes us a formidable force ensuring our retirement, COLA benefits, and supplemental insurance are fully funded. I'm excited about the future as our President-elect Karen Peterman takes the lead. At our May luncheon, we will elect new members to the Executive Board and enjoy spending time together with fellow educators. See you there!

Libby Burney, President

Legislative

By the time you get this newsletter the 2023 Spring Tennessee Legislative Session should have come to an end. As I am writing this article the plan is to close out this session by the end of the week. Representatives have been asked to prepare for staying past Thursday, if necessary to close out this session. This session has been memorable in many ways...

Last year at this time I wrote, *"The Tennessee 2022 Session has finally come to an end!! This session was the most extreme I have witnessed." Without question this session has far exceeded 2022's.*

I am so concerned about the "anti" public school bills which have been presented and often passed. The third-grade retention bill is among these. Additionally, **HB433** which expands the ESA vouchers to Hamilton County schools has been amended to include Knox County!! Five of our representatives, Zachary, Wright, Lafferty, Davis, and Carringer have betrayed their constituents by sponsoring this bill. Representatives, McKenzie and Johnson, are solidly opposed.

At the local level, our school board is in the process of approving an all-boys charter school known as Knoxville Preparatory School. There has been a great deal of local resistance, however, the school board has called a special meeting for April 27 to vote for a second time on this charter as it failed to pass April 6 at the regular meeting. ***If you are interested in getting involved.*** Call or email me: 865-250-3854

jaskinne@hotmail.com

Jane Skinner, Legislative Chair

KCRTA Program Plans



Men who take an annual vacation are 32% less likely to die from heart disease; while women who takes vacations at least twice a year are less likely to experience depression. These statistics from *LeisureCare* should have you packing your bags! At our March luncheon, Emmaly Fisher offered tips for making senior travel carefree. If you weren't able to hear her presentation, keep these tips in mind as you plan your next trip: know your limitations, both physical and financial; consider organized tours; let insurance take the worry out of travel; avoid over-packing, but be sure to pack your sense of humor; and contact your bank, credit card company and cellphone provider before you leave home.

However, you will not want to be out of town on May 25th. Instead, mark your calendar and make plans to have lunch with your friends and to listen as members of the Knoxville Area Dulcimer Club share their musical talents. You are in for a treat! Lunch is always ready at 11:15. See you at the Foundry on May 25th.

Karen Peterman, President-Elect

KCRTA Officers and Committee Chairs

President:

Libby Burney

President-Elect:

Karen Peterman

Past President:

Don Loy

Secretary:

Gussie Cherry

Community Relations:

Margaret Willis

Hosting Chair:

Linda Tyler

Information & Protective
Services:

Pam Chipley

Legislative Chair:

Jane Skinner

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Jeanette Casteel,

Chris Vandergriff

Newsletter Editor:

Myra Sowder

Parliamentarian:

Mike Blankenship

Scholarship Foundation Rep.:

Lexa Hooten

Web Page Chairman:

Chris Vandergriff

Executive Secretary /

Treasurer:

David Huntsinger

Membership Matters

Thank you for your continued support of KCRTA! If you are a payroll deduction member, you do not need to send a dues check; your dues are taken out of your TCRS check each month.

Membership dues letters will be sent by US mail early in May. Your letter will tell you how much your dues are. Please fill out the membership form at the bottom of your letter, cut it off, and promptly mail it with your check to:

KCRTA
711 Hall of Fame Drive
Knoxville, TN 37917

PAYROLL DEDUCTION is still an option to have the dues taken out of your TCRS check. Simply fill out the personal information on the left end of the form and your SS number and signature on the right end. By choosing this method, you will never have to send another dues check!

Chris Vandergriff and Jeanette Casteel, KCRTA Membership Co-Chairs

Website Help Needed

KCRTA needs someone to take over our website! The main responsibility is to keep it updated. If you are familiar with websites or interested in this position, please contact Jeanette Casteel, 865-705-9632 or jacasteel1@gmail.com. Her daughter, Leslie will be happy to assist you.

Historical Photo

This National Education Association commemorative postcard was issued on July 1, 1957 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. All KCRTA members had the privilege of signing it at our March membership meeting at The Foundry. Thank you Mike Blakenship, KCRTA Parliamentarian for making this special Membership Moment happen.

If Knox County Schools are not in session for some reason, the Knox County Retired Teachers Association will not meet.



Information & Protective Services

How do I back up my data on an external hard drive? Backups are important because if your computer hard drive suddenly fails, there goes all those photos and videos you've been saving. Consider buying an external hard drive with 500 gigabytes (GB) to 1 terabyte (TB) of storage capacity. Solid-state drives (SSDs) are more reliable and can access stored data at faster speeds than hard-drive disks (HDDs). Mac computers can be backed up regularly by using the built-in app called Time Machine. On a PC, go to Start, then Settings, then Update & Security, then Backup, then Add a Drive. Chose the external hard drive, and the computer should run a backup program.

"Technology Made Easy" by Sherlyn Freeman AARP magazine October 22

Pam Chipley, Information & Protective Services

TRTA Information

Please see the article below for the latest information on the TCRS COLA for 2023-2024. Donna Cotner, TRTA Executive Director 800-342-8367 ext 3151

TRTA is your **ADVOCATE ORGANIZATION**
TRTA advocates for a fully funded Tennessee Consolidated Retirement System and an annual cost-of-living adjustment (COLA). The COLA for 2023-2024 will be three (3) percent, beginning July 1, 2023, for retirees who have been retired for at least 12 months on July 1, 2023, and will be included in the July pension check. Both the TCRS Legacy Plan and the TCRS Hybrid Plan are fully funded and remain in the top 5 pension plans for fiscal soundness and efficient management.

KCRTA Membership Moments

The KCRTA Membership Committee hopes that you will take just a few moments and write down one of your special moments that you experienced during your teaching career. It might be an interaction with a student, staff or an award that you are proud of receiving, or a funny, sentimental, happy moment, a leadership moment, a friendship moment, or why you became a teacher, why it is important to be a KCRTA member, etc., etc. KCRTA members can submit as many “moments” as they would like—the more the merrier!! The Membership Committee is going to take the members’ moments and publish them in our newsletter and share a few at our KCRTA luncheons. We are so excited about this project and want as many KCRTA members to participate as possible. Thank you!

Please email to Sowdermossy868@gmail.com or mail to Myra Sowder, 8045 Majors Road Corryton, TN 37721-2713

KCRTA MEMBER NAME: _____

DATE: _____

YOUR BIRTHDATE: _____

YEARS AND SCHOOLS YOU TAUGHT AT: _____

KCRTA Membership Moments

KCRTA Scholarship Foundation

The Knox County Retired Teachers Association Scholarship Foundation is a 501 © (3) non-profit tax-exempt organization. The goal of the Foundation is to provide financial assistance in the form of scholarships to students who are classified as full-time seniors or graduate students, who are pursuing a Tennessee teaching certification. The scholarships are awarded to students enrolled in a college or university in East Tennessee.

Since the 1980's, the scholarship foundation program has been a major emphasis of the Knox County Retired Teachers Association, and each November the KCRTA Scholarship Foundation holds its annual scholarship foundation awards ceremony and luncheon at The Foundry. For many years there were three standing scholarships---the Tom Underwood and the Reuben Hunter, named for the two men who established the scholarship program (1993), and the Colleen Bennett who left an endowment at her death to sustain the program. Since 2018, the families of Bill Crosland and Cindi Schowalter have funded a scholarship in their names. In addition, each year, the Knox County Retired Teachers Association, honors a member whose outstanding service to the organization merits recognition. Other named scholarships come from donations in memory of or in honor of those whose friends and/or family members wish to recognize someone special.

Although the scholarship initiative as we know it today has grown substantially and has evolved into a thriving, recognized effort of the KCRTA, it still remains true to the goals and core values established by its founders. Scholarship recipients are chosen from the applications of exceptional future educators enrolled in an East Tennessee college or university teacher education program. Each fall a selection committee, made up of former educators, critiques the scholarship entries. Over the years, the amount awarded to students has increased from \$300 during the first three years to the current total of \$1,500.

Gifts are welcomed in any amount and may be designated for either the Scholarship Fund or the Endowment Fund.

The KCRTA Scholarship Board appreciates the number of families and friends who have honored loved ones with named scholarships in recent years. To make a donation, please contact Lexa Hooten or David Huntsinger.

KCRTA Scholarship Foundation Board of Directors

Chairperson	David Huntsinger	huntsingerd@bellsouth.net
Vice-Chairperson	Gussie Cherry	
Secretary	Libby Burney	
Treasurer	Lexa Hooten	lexahooten@bellsouth.net
Member	Liz Honeycutt	
Member	Connie Cole	
Member	David Sincerbox	

Calendar

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

- May 25, 2023

Knox Dulcimer program at the Foundry

- July 27, 2023

Legislative Forum

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

*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 hard copy of *Retirement Times* is available upon request. Contact Jeanette Casteel at

(865) 705-9632 or
jacasteel1@gmail.com

KCRTA Scholarship Donations

Received for March - April 2023

In Memory of

Joann Arnett
Betty Berry
Betty Berry
Betty Berry
Betty Berry
Betty Berry
Norma Kelley
Debra Thompson
David Wetzel

From

Neldean Bragg
Neldean Bragg
Steve and Joy Chamberlin
Timothy and Kelley Connolly
Patsy and Bobby Nesbitt
Marjorie Raby
Anne Loy
Donna Hardy
Sara Baskin

In Honor of

Gussie Cherry
Bernice Connor
Dr. Mary Lou Kanipe
Sheryl Sallie

Elnora Williams
Elnora Williams
Elnora Williams
Elnora Williams

Donations

Annette Cardwell
Emma R. Catlett

Necrology

Dorothy (Dot) Aldmon
Patricia Baker
Stanley Barnes
Clyde Edward Hall (Eddie)
Michele Holloway
Imogene Hutson
Carol Redford
Nancy Rhea
John Roberts
Mary Wilson



Meal Price Increase

A note about the price of our wonderful meals. The Foundry held off as long as they could, but increasing costs necessitated raising the luncheon price to \$20. This includes gratuities for the servers. Many thanks for your understanding.

"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."

-Nelson Mandela

