

Retirement Times

President's Message

How often do you find yourself measuring time with one of these two phrases, Before Covid or After Covid? The days Before Covid have taken on a rosy hue. Students were better scholars Before Covid. We traveled more often and further Before Covid. We received better restaurant service Before Covid. After Covid refers to any time since mid-March 2020. Can you believe grocery prices After Covid? How about the After Covid housing shortage? Not to mention the nearly impossible After Covid task of finding a salesperson in your favorite department store. The World Health Organization declared an end to the global Public Health Emergency for Covid-19 in May of this year; however, it's unreasonable to think that we will ever return to the good old days before Covid, but we can do a lot to make After Covid just as fulfilling. I am often told that more retirees attended KCRTA luncheons Before Covid. If you haven't been joining us for our bi-monthly luncheons, join us in September and bring your questions for our state representatives. Just remember to put the bottle of hand sanitizer in your pocket.

Karen Peterman, President

Historical Photo



This National Education Association commemorative postcard was issued on July 1, 1957 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. All KCRTA New Members had the privilege of signing it at our July 2023 membership meeting at the Foundry.

Mike Blakenship, Parliamentarian

KCRTA July Program and Service Project

On July 27th Knoxville retired teachers met at the Foundry in a Celebration of newly retired teachers. At the celebration, we were entertained by the O'Conner Center Jazz band. It was their first performance. This coming September we will take a look at the upcoming TN Legislative session. Thank you to all who brought School Supplies to the July meeting. The School Supplies were donated to the Knox County Teacher Supply Center.

Mary Brockett, President-Elect



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KCRTA Membership Moments

Special thanks to those who have already paid your dues for 2023-2024. However, we haven't heard from several of you! If you haven't already done so, simply fill out the membership form and mail it along with your dues check to: KCRTA, 711 Hall of Fame Drive, Knoxville, TN 37917. The memberships dues were due on June 30.

Payroll Deduction is still an option for paying your dues! All you have to do is fill out your personal information on the membership form AND your SS number and signature on the right hand side of the form! Then send that to KCRTA, 711 Hall of Fame Drive, Knoxville, TN 37917. Less than \$6.00/month will be deducted from your TCRS check; you will never have to remember to mail a dues check again!

Several have asked questions about your membership card/number. These are included in the Fall issue of the TRTA Newsletter which is mailed to all members. It will be on the back of that newsletter and is perforated for easy removal. Your membership number will be on that card. If you still have questions regarding this matter, contact Chris; and he will assist you in any way he can.

Thank you for your continued support of KCRTA!

Chris Vandergriff, KCRTA Membership Chair

Legislative

Please plan to attend our September luncheon to meet with our Knox County representatives and senators! This is always a great opportunity to find out more about who they are, what their role is in the state legislation and what their priorities are. We are so fortunate to have this venue to meet with our legislators and to have these special conversations. Our local senators and representatives include: Sen Dr. Richard Briggs dist7, Sen Becky Massey dist6, Lt Gov Randy McNally dist6, Rep Elaine Davis dist18, Rep Michele Carringer dist16, Rep Gloria Johnson, dist90, Rep Sam McKenzie dist15, Rep Dave Wright dist19, Rep Jason Zachary dist14, and Rep Justin Lafferty dist89. All of them have been invited and I will be calling each of them soon to confirm their invitations. Just a quick reminder Michele Carringer, Gloria Johnson, Justin Lafferty, and Sam McKenzie are on education subcommittees. This might be a great opportunity to find out more about ESA's/Vouchers, Charter Schools, Funding and Third Grade Retention. Tennessee Education Association has filed a federal lawsuit alleging that a state law restricting the teaching of 14 "prohibited concepts" is unconstitutional. The suit says that the 2021 law is vague and creates confusion and fear among teachers across the state about what they are allowed to discuss in classrooms. The result, it says, is a violation of 14th Amendment rights to due process.

It would be great if you would submit questions for our legislators before the event. You can submit these to Valerie at valbeeb@gmail.com. Valerie has graciously volunteered to introduce all our guests in September.

Let's have a big turnout for our legislators and let them know how much we care. This would be a great luncheon to invite a fellow retired teacher and encourage them to join.

If you are interested in getting involved, call or email me:

865-250-3854 jaskinne@hotmail.com

Jane Skinner, Legislative Chair

Information & Protective Services

Do Not Click on a Link!

I had a conversation with a retired teacher recently about a scam. They were searching the internet for some information when what appeared to be a request from Microsoft popped on the screen. That is something most of us are familiar with and feel like we can trust this company. However this request was NOT from Microsoft. They were asked to go to several different links. It finally came down to that they were told to electronic transfer funds or wire a large amount of money from their account to clear up something that they claimed was wrong. This retired teacher realized that something was not right and immediately called their bank to stop the transfer. It was too LATE! Please remember just don't click on anything that you don't recognize personally. Get off the computer or phone and make a call yourself to check out what they are asking you to do. Call your bank if you are the least bit confused.

Pam Chipley, Information & Protective Services

KCRTA Scholarship Foundation

The KCRTA Scholarship Foundation will be awarding nine (9) Scholarships at its November 16, 2023 luncheon. The students receiving the scholarships will be from colleges and universities from the East Tennessee area.

The scholarships are made possible through the generosity of members of the Association. Without these donations, the Scholarship Foundation would not exist.

We will be honoring the following persons with named scholarships: Tom Underwood, Pat and Rueben Hunter, Colleen Bennett, Bill Crosland, Earl Wells, Don Loy, Betty Berry, Dan Williams and Cindy Schowalter.

The selection committee co-chaired by Mary Lou Kanipe and Christine Oehler will determine the recipients for the scholarships.

If you plan to attend the luncheon on November 16th at 11:00 a.m. , you need to RSVP by Friday, November 10th, 2023. RSVP to David Huntsinger via (text) at 423-231-0682 or (email) at huntsingerd@bellsouth.net.

Hope to see you at the luncheon. It is free to all members of the KCRTA.

KCRTA Scholarship Foundation Board of Directors

Chairperson	David Huntsinger	huntsingerd@bellsouth.net
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Mike Blankenship, KCRTA Parliamentarian Honored at CHS 50th Reunion

The Central High School class of 1973 held its 50th class reunion on August 19, 2023, at the Foundry on the World's Fair Park.

Reaching a 50th class reunion is truly a significant achievement – reminiscing about the shared experiences that have shaped the lives over the years and recalling the laughter-filled moments of those long past teenage years.

The 175 attendees at the CHS reunion included teachers Rita Woodall Doak, Jean Payne and teacher/coaches, Bud Bales and Tommy Schumpert.

Saturday was a special moment for Mike Blankenship as his classmate Lee Beeler presented him the Central High Bobcat Pride and Tradition Award from the class of 1973 for his unwavering devotion to the education of the students of Knox County Schools for over 42 years. The accolades Mike Blankenship has received during his tenure as an educator from local to national recognition acknowledging his dedication to excellence as an educator are indeed remarkable.

This is part of Mike's posted Facebook acknowledgement: "I want to thank each and every member of the 1973 Central High School BOBCAT family. Moreover, Lee Beeler and others orchestrated a 'cards close to the vest pocket' operation with total surprise delivered with a high level of precision. It was such a delight to reacquaint and share formative experiences that shaped each of my Central High School classmates and CHS staff and teachers. This acknowledgment of last night's honor was delivered with CHS 'Pride and Tradition' and I humbly express a heartfelt thank you!"

As Lee Beeler stated during his presentation, "Mike Blankenship has epitomized the spirit of Bobcat pride and tradition in his 42 years as a teacher with Knox County Schools."

I, too, am proud to be a Central High Bobcat!

Article Written by Susan Espiritu/August 22, 2023, Fountain City, Our Town Neighbors

Calendar

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

- September 28, 2023

Legislative Forum

- November 16, 2023

Scholarship Awards Luncheon

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 Chris Vandergriff at Chris.vandergriff@gmail.com

KCRTA Scholarship Donations

Received for July - August 2023

In Memory of

Mike Asquith
Betty Berry
Betty Berry
Jeanette Casteel
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Jeanette Casteel
Bill Crosland
Jean Woody Mills
Jean Woody Mills
Marjorie Rogers
Frankie Walker

In Honor of

Tom Underwood

Donations

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William S. Parker, Jr.
Kaye Williams

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Wilma Myers
Dr. Mary Lou Kanipe
Erin Allen
Neldean Bragg
Mary Brockett
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Libby Burney
Deborah Cantrell

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Pam Chipley
Judy Fleenor
Ron and Lexa Hooten
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Karen Peterman
Kitty Spry
Linda Tyler
Terry and Marsha Uselton
Jennifer Crosland
Brenda H. Miller
Verda Ann Rogers
Wilma Myers
Neldean Bragg

Emma Ruth Catlett



If you have any information on the KCRTA Association for the years 1970-1998, please contact David Huntsinger, 423-231-0682 or email David at huntsingerd@bellsouth.net