

# SCRTA NEWS

Summit County Retired Teachers Association

THE SUMMIT COUNTY AFFILIATE OF Ohio Retired Teachers Association October - November 2019

## President's Corner



Greetings,

Please note our luncheon is scheduled for the SECOND Tuesday of November. This is due to the First Tuesday being Election Day. Many of our members work in the Voting Polls and of course many of you vote. We trust this is more convenient for everyone.

Johnnette Curry has an interesting program planned for us. Please see details elsewhere in the Newsletter.

Did you know SCRTA has a website? You can access it at [www.summitcountyrta.org](http://www.summitcountyrta.org). Refer your fellow Retirees to browse it also. If you have any questions, you may contact our Webmaster, Leroy Martin.

Our Legislative Watch Dog, Bill Siegfert, has an article elsewhere in the Newsletter you will want to read. Also, he will be writing a Letter to the Editor of the Akron Beacon Journal stating our position on proposed legislation affecting Retired Teachers. Hopefully it will get published! SCRTA is looking out for you in your retirement by keeping you informed and knowledgeable of Legislation affecting your retirement.

Look forward to seeing you at our Luncheon on Tuesday, November 12th at 11:30 a.m. Lunch is served at 12:00 noon! See you there!

*Paul DiMascio, SCRTA President*

## HAVE LAUGHS WILL TRAVEL

Make your plans to attend the next SCRTA luncheon meeting at Guy's Party Center on November 12th at noon. Our special guest presenter will be Carolyn Mostyn ... a local author, columnist, humorist, and entertainer. A popular speaker, she has appeared in The Suburbanite as a columnist and as a featured contributor in the Mature Living magazine. Carolyn believes that "laughter is the best defense against life's setbacks." While encouraging us to laugh, she also sympathizes with the problems of aging, creaking joints and those moments you can't remember what you were just thinking of. This promises to be a memorable presentation.

Come and bring a friend to enjoy and support this event.

*Johnnette Curry*

*First VP and Program Chair*

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# Scholarship News

*The Scholarship Committee periodically checks in with the former scholarship recipients. Our past recipients are on the move...here are updates from one of them.*

"It's so nice to hear from you, Mrs. Shaw! I am currently student teaching in music at Tuslaw Middle and High Schools in Massillon! I'm having a wonderful time and learning so much. There's no doubt that I've chosen the right path of education. I am looking forward to my graduation from the University of Akron in December!

I can't thank you all enough for helping me pay for my schooling. Thank you all for what you do to help area education majors like myself go to college and support the schools in the community in the ways that you do!"

Best,  
JoAnna Hrepcak

Music Education Major  
The University of Akron  
President Ohio Collegiate Music Education Association  
Secretary North East Ohio Clarinet Association

*Your contributions are making a difference in the lives of education majors throughout Summit County. In November, the donations cups will again be on the table, and we thank you in advance for your generous contributions!!*

*Judi Hill and Vicky Shaw, Scholarship Co-Chairmen*

**"Volunteers don't get paid because they're worthless, but because they're priceless."  
— Sherry Anderson**



## SCRTA MANAGEMENT BOARD

**President** - Paul DiMascio (330-882-4738)

**1st VP/ Prog.** - Johnnette Curry (330-699-4123)

**2nd VP/Legislative Chair** - Bill Siegfert  
(330-819-4123)

**Past President** - Mary Lou Swartz (234-678-0747)

**Administrative Assistant** - Judy Mervine  
(330-745-7587)

**Treasurer** - Paul Green (330-733-7311)

**Asst. Treasurer/Membership** - Susanne Grywalski  
(330-773-9269)

**Public Relations** - Ruby Winter (330-644-6886)

**Newsletter Editor** - Elaine Jarvis (330-607-0226)

**Bulk Mailing** - Rozanne Emich (330-603-7660)

**Travel** - Carolyn Vogenitz (330-645-9928)

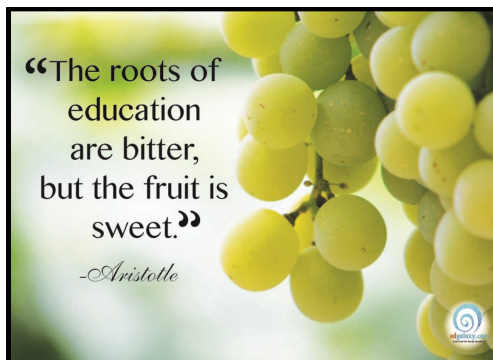
**Web Master** - Leroy Martin (330-666-3984)

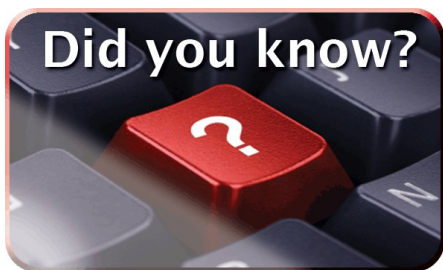
**Nominating Committee: 3 elected members** - Carol Caughron (330-745-1776); Lennie Green (330-630-2440); open; and **2 Members at Large** - Mary Anasson (330-836-4272) - Informative and Protective Services; Christine Bean (330-784-4575) - Community Service

**Scholarship Committee** - Vicky Shaw (330-773-5862) and Judi Hill (330-688-2512) Co-Chair

**Members At Large** - Micki Lavis (330-854-3054) and Phyllis Lewis (330-342-3550)

**Chaplain** - Rebecca Moore (330-497-9326)





What is normal and what is not normal as you age?

**(1) WRINKLES, SAGGING SKIN, AND AGE SPOTS:**

Accumulated inflammation, years of sun exposure, environmental toxins, exposure to irritants in cosmetic products, and stress all play a role. Smoking causes wrinkles! Gravity also causes sagging skin. Age spots are due, to a large degree, to sun exposure. Sugar plays a role in developing wrinkles. Try to reduce your sugar intake to 10% of your daily calories; eat more oily fish, protect yourself from the sun; and do not smoke. But, no matter what you do, aging and gravity will take their toll. **(2) AGE RELATED**

**DECLINE IN SKELETON MUSCLE TISSUE (SARCOPENIA):** This can lead to lower strength and endurance and poorer balance. One can lose up to

5% of muscle mass each decade after 30! A sedentary lifestyle, poor diet, and gaining weight all contribute to sarcopenia. **(3) HEARING LOSS:** The

most common cause of hearing loss is AGE! Other causes are: excessive ear wax, infections, tumors, and certain medications. You can help your hearing

by using earplugs during noisy activities; not smoking or vaping; and using B-complex supplements because low levels of Vitamin B12 and folic acid can

contribute to hearing loss. **(4) VISION LOSS:** If it is due to aging, then one needs glasses; trouble adjusting from indoor to outdoor light; and stigmatizing

some colors. Actual vision loss is NOT a normal part of aging! Issues that can lead to blindness: Age-related macular degeneration (AMD), cataracts, and

glaucoma. People over 50 years of age should have a comprehensive eye exam. Many age-related diseases have no warning—detect them in their early

stages to avoid vision loss. Diet affects diseases of the eyes. Eat bold-colored food that is full of antioxi-

dants. Also, leafy green and root vegetables may prevent glaucoma. **(5) SLEEP ISSUES:** Changes in sleep patterns are normal—but, sleep becomes lighter and fragmented as we get older. The deepest stages of sleep may be completely gone by those over 90 years of age. The body's natural clock changes. More serious sleep disorders are breathing

problems and restless leg syndrome! These may be due to physical and psychiatric issues—as well as meds that treat these issues. Practice good sleep hygiene. If meds are the cause, see your doctor.

**(6) MEMORY LOSS:** Some memory loss with age is normal! Short-term forgetfulness, for example. De-

mentia is not a normal part of aging! The most prevalent part of aging is Alzheimer's disease. Alzheimer's is probably caused by genetics, and environmental and lifestyle factors that affect the brain over

time. One can do a lot of things to preserve and sharpen his or her memory. For example: mind games, challenging reading, crossword puzzles, edu-

cational classes, physical exercise, avoiding alcohol and tobacco, reducing stress level, increasing antioxidant rich fruits and vegetables, eating more cold-

water fish, walnuts, and flaxseed. **(7) OSTEOPOROSIS:** "Porous, weakened bone can be found in people of all ages."

Osteoporosis is not a normal part of aging! "Bone tissue is broken down and repaired on a regular basis."

Bone density reaches its peak at about age 30. Osteoporosis is when more bone is lost than can be rebuilt. The bones become brittle

and easy to break. Females older than 65 develop this condition. Also, inactivity, smoking, having a small frame, low body weight, low calcium and Vita-

min D levels or estrogen, or a family history of osteoporosis ALL can cause osteoporosis. (Dr. Andrew Weil, Self Healing, December, 2018)

Peanuts are legumes and not true nuts, and their fatty acid is less healthy. Choose almonds, cashews, walnuts, pistachios, or macadamia nuts instead.

Heart disease studies in the UK compared women who sit still with women who regularly fidget while

**See "Did You Know", Pg. 4**

### **“Did You Know?”, Continued**

seated. More than 12 years of follow-up showed that fidgeters developed heart disease significantly less frequently than women who sit still.

Hibiscus tea tops the ranking for antioxidant power, even beating out green tea. It lowers cholesterol and blood pressure. At the end of a trial, 21% of the participants had normalized their blood pressure. Drink two cups of hibiscus tea daily—hot or cold.

“Moderate to vigorous physical activity in the a.m. or p.m. does not compensate for prolong sitting.” (American Heart Disease Scientific Statement). Americans are sedentary for about six to eight hours daily and more for those over 60. Move every half hour to help maintain healthy blood sugar and weight. Walk away from your desk or work and stretch for a few minutes.

Surgeons doing double duty increase certain patients’ risk. Lead surgeons sometimes schedule several procedures at the same time, moving between operating rooms while others do routine parts of the surgery. This is usually safe, but it increases the odds of complications and death—with coronary bypass grafts and for elderly patients or those in poor health. In these special cases, patients should ask for non-overlapping surgery or choose a different doctor.

The best-selling ginger ale contains virtually no ginger. Canada Dry no longer labels its ginger ale as made from real ginger. Tests show that other substances are used to mimic ginger.

Pedestrian deaths reached a new high in 2018. Statistics show that the number of pedestrian deaths involving SUVs, rose 50% from 2013 to 2017, since SUVs became more popular. Part of the reason is that the pedestrians are much less likely to survive being hit by an SUV than an accident involving a smaller vehicle.

Airline entertainment screens have cameras pointed at passengers. The cameras are preinstalled—and the airlines say the cameras are disabled or never active. It looks like a cell phone camera and is usual-

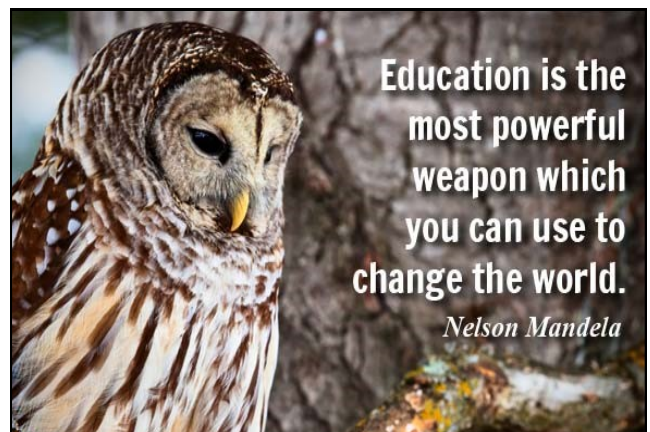
ly below the screen. But, all devices can potentially be hacked. So, to protect your privacy, paste something opaque (like an adhesive bandage) over it.

Delta and JetBlue are the only major airlines whose miles do not expire because of inactivity.

Nearly half of all cellphone calls are SPAM! The FCC estimates that 90% of the phony calls have familiar caller IDs, appearing to come from your local area.

The following quotation was sent to me by Annie Davis, KKI—Florida: “Perhaps one has to be very old before one learns how to be amused rather than shocked.” (Pearl S. Buck)

Mary Kostas Anasson  
Informative and Protective Services





## LEGISLATIVE NEWS



Bill Sieferth,  
SCRTA Legislative Chair

### ***Management Board Endorses Social Security Fairness Bills***

The SCRTA Management Board has endorsed two bills at the federal level which, if passed, would eliminate the reduction in earned social security benefits for individuals who receive a public pension. Both House Resolution 141 and Senate Bill 521, collectively referred to as the Social Security Fairness Act of 2019, call for repeal of the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP, enacted in 1983) and the Government Pension Offset (GPO, 1977).

Both bills enjoy a level of bi-partisan support which exceeds that of previous repeal efforts. H.R. 141 was introduced by Rep. Rodney Davis (R-ILL); S.521 by Sen. Sherrod Brown (D-OH). Among the House's 198 co-sponsors are 150 Democrats and 48 Republicans. The Senate's co-sponsors include 28 Democrats and 4 Republicans. Brown's bill is before the Senate Finance Committee while Davis' has been referred to the Social Security Sub-committee of the House Ways and Means Committee.

Through application of a complicated formula, WEP reduces social security payments to eligible recipients who also receive benefits from a public pension plan. In 2018, 1.9 million people—retired firefighters, teachers, police officers and others receiving a public pension—were affected by WEP. These are individuals who worked in positions in which they paid social security taxes either before or after their public service career or, particularly in the case of teachers, were employed in such jobs during summer recess months in order to supplement their income

from teaching.

GPO on the other hand is much more severe in its reduction of social security survivor benefits paid to state or local government pensioners, including teachers. Take the case of a teacher, for example, who is receiving an STRS benefit and whose spouse receives a social security benefit. If the spouse passes, the social security survivor benefit paid to the teacher is reduced by 2/3 of the teacher's STRS benefit. If 2/3 of the teacher's pension exceeds the amount of the survivor benefit, the teacher receives no survivor benefit at all. Incredibly, approximately 90% of the public employees affected by the GPO lose their entire social security spousal benefit. GPO penalized nearly 700,000 people in 2018.

It is important to note that not all public employees across the states are covered by a public pension plan. Many are covered by Social Security. According to recent figures, the percentage of public employees covered by a public pension plan ranges from a high of 98% in Ohio to only 2% in Vermont. All told, only 28% of all public employees in the U.S. are covered by a public pension plan. Obviously, if that percentage increased, the number of people who would lose earned social security benefits under WEP and GPO would also increase.

Members are encouraged to write Sen. Brown and Rep. Davis to express support for their respective bills. In lieu of writing, members can make use of the contact form on each legislator's website:

#### **S. 521**

Senator Sherrod Brown  
503 Hart Senate Office Bldg.  
Washington, D.C. 20510  
[brown.senate.gov/contact](http://brown.senate.gov/contact)

#### **H.R. 141**

Rep. Rodney Davis  
1740 Longworth House Office Bldg.  
Washington, D.C. 20515  
[rodneydavis.house.gov/contact](http://rodneydavis.house.gov/contact)

**Please See Legislation, Pg. 6**



## COLA LAWSUIT UPDATE

The class action lawsuit filed by two Cincinnati teachers last May continues in the United States District Court for the Southern District of Ohio. The lawsuit alleges that STRS failed to comply with Ohio law which requires a determination by the STRS actuary in a public report that an adjustment to the COLA was necessary to preserve the fiscal integrity of the plan. In addition to the numerous violations cited in the lawsuit (see the August/September edition of the SCRTA Newsletter), the teachers argue that there are a variety of ways STRS could have addressed the financial issues leading to the COLA cut.

As of this article's publication, the class of litigants has not yet been certified by the Court. A motion filed by STRS to dismiss the lawsuit was rejected. On August 26, attorneys for the teachers filed a "First Amended Class Action Complaint and Jury Demand." The relief being sought in the suit includes a declaration by the Court that Defendants' (STRS and individual board members) actions violate the United States Constitution, the Ohio Constitution, and federal and state laws, restoration of the COLA, including lost payments and interest, and attorneys' fees.

Members should be mindful that in the event of a favorable ruling by the Court, the manner in which STRS meets its obligation to restore the COLA is critical as to the degree to which the System's fiscal integrity is or is not affected.



Executive Director  
Dr. Robin Rayfield



President  
Gale C. Adkins

### VISION

The Ohio Retired Teachers Association will be a model for accountability, sound judgment, effective communication and proactive pursuit of member benefits and services. ORTA will be recognized nationally for its performance on behalf of Ohio's retired educators. The State Teachers Retirement System of Ohio (STRS), the Ohio legislature and other national, state and local organizations will seek ORTA's advice and counsel.

### PURPOSE

*(ORTA Bylaws, [revised 2017])*

ORTA'S mission is to monitor, advocate for, and protect the pensions and benefits of its members. The Association shall encourage individuals to improve the social and economic changes and issues relevant to their retirement.

### MEMBERSHIP

Membership is open to any educator retired from the public schools, state and municipal colleges, and universities of Ohio; any educator retired in any other state but living in Ohio; any spouse who becomes a benefit recipient of State Teachers Retirement System (**STRS**); and any person in Ohio interested in education and the issues of retirees.

*As of August 12, 2019, the **ORTA New Offices** are located at 250 E, Wilson Bridge Rd. Suite 150, Worthington, Ohio 43085. Phone number remains the same ... 614-431-7002*



Welcome to our new members **Marilyn White** and **Dorothy Miner**. We are so happy to have you join our organization and hope to see you at our next luncheon.

If you are not a lifetime member, we are currently requesting 2020 dues be paid. I will be collecting dues at the November 12 luncheon in person or by November 30 by mail. Please fill out the membership form enclosed in this newsletter and return it to me with a check made out to SCRTA for \$40. If you would like a membership card, enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope with your payment or see me at the meeting. Our local chapter keeps \$10 and the remaining \$30 is sent to ORTA.

We still have 20 members who have not yet paid their 2019 dues. If you are not sure if you are up-to-date with your dues, please contact me. I will gladly answer any questions or take the names of prospective members.

Susanne Grywalski  
Membership /Assistant Treasurer  
[sgrywalski@aol.com](mailto:sgrywalski@aol.com)



### Memories Build a Special Bridge

Our memories build a special bridge when loved ones have to part, to help us feel we're with them still and sooth a grieving heart. Our memories span the years we shared, preserving ties that bind, they build a special bridge of love and bring us peace of mind.

2018-2019

*Mabel Brown*

*Hubert Witte*

*Robert Hunter*

*Rudolph DiDonato*

*Waldene Mazak*

*Evelyn Burkins*

*Paul Cerull*

*Harold Wilson*

*Mary Carol Griffiths*

*Margarite Wilson*

*Norma Leidel*

*Ellen Campbell*

*Patricia Schaffner*

*Alice Shade*

*Margaret Moran*

*Jeanne Grunninger*

*Barbara O'Connor*

*Esther Warffuel-Clark*

*(If you know of any deceased SCRTA members not on the above list, please call Christine Bean at 330-784-4575, or e-mail her at [clbean@neo.rr.com](mailto:clbean@neo.rr.com))*

Summit County Retired Teachers Association  
452 Herbert Rd.  
Akron, Ohio 44312

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION  
U, S, POSTAGE PAID  
AKRON, OHIO 44309  
Permit No. 418

## ELECTRONIC SERVICE REQUESTED

## October-November



**2019**

SCRTA Website  
[www.summitcountyrta.org](http://www.summitcountyrta.org)

Leroy Martin - Webmaster  
[lmartin561@gmail.com](mailto:lmartin561@gmail.com)

## COMMUNITY SERVICE

Thank you for the school supply donations. They will be needed all year long. Please continue to donate them as well as health and beauty, paper, and cleaning supplies. Another item needed is warm socks. For 5 or more items, you will receive an extra door prize ticket.

*Christine Bean, Community Service Chairman*



**November 12, 2019** ... SCRTA / ORTA General Luncheon Meeting ... **12 Noon** at Guy's Party Center

**February 11, 2020** ... SCRTA / ORTA Management Board Meeting ... **9:30 am** at the AEA Building in Akron.

**February 18, 2020** ... **Snow Date** ... SCRTA / ORTA Management Board Meeting ... **9:30 am** at the AEA



**SCRTA / ORTA GENERAL LUNCHEON MEETING**

**Tuesday, November 12, 2019**

**Guy's Party Center**

**500 East Waterloo Road, Akron, OH 44319**

**12 Noon**

**Price: \$17.00**

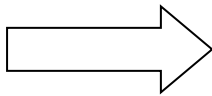
**DOOR PRIZES**

**Bring 5 or more items for the Community Service Project and receive an extra door prize ticket.**

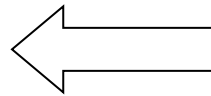
When you make your reservation, you will need to indicate your entrée: Swiss Steak, Broiled Scrod, \*Chicken Paradise, or Vegetarian Stir Fry. Mashed potatoes, green beans, salad, garlic bread, sherbet, coffee, tea or lemonade are included with your entrée (Tax & tip are included).

**Clip this reservation form and send to: Carolyn Vogenitz 3326 Waterside Dr. Akron, OH 44319**

**Phone: (330-645-9928)**



**LUNCHEON RESERVATION**



NAME \_\_\_\_\_ ENTRÉE SELECTION: \_\_\_\_SWISS STEAK \_\_\_\_ \*CHICKEN PARADISE

\_\_\_\_ BROILED SCROD \_\_\_\_ VEGETARIAN STIR FRY

Check your choice of entrée, make checks payable to SCRTA and send to Ruby Winter. She must receive this completed reservation form and your check by **November 6, 2019**.

Note: Chicken Paradise is charbroiled chicken breast in an Italian dressing based marinade.



**Our luncheon meetings are now always on Tuesdays!!**



**DUAL-MEMBERSHIP FORM FOR SCRTA & ORTA DUES**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_  
Street City Zip

SCRTA / ORTA DUAL-MEMBERSHIP DUES \$40 \_\_\_\_ (SCRTA \$10 / ORTA \$30)  
(Dual-membership required) YEAR YOU RETIRED \_\_\_\_\_

I am a SCRTA LIFE member \_\_\_\_\_

I am an ORTA LIFE member \_\_\_\_\_

I pay ORTA directly \_\_\_\_\_

BRING THIS FORM WHEN PAYING DUES. MAKE ALL CHECKS PAYABLE TO SCRTA.

Check # \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

BY MAIL SEND TO: SUSANNE GRYWALSKI – 1862 GLENMOUNT AVE., AKRON, OH 44301