

SCRTA NEWS

Summit County Retired Teachers Association

THE SUMMIT COUNTY AFFILIATE OF Ohio Retired Teachers Association Aug. / Sept. 2022

President's Corner



Dear SCRTA Members,

Yes, the President's photo is not posted for a good reason. Who is taking my place is still a mystery to be solved? Someone's name must be ready for our September Luncheon/Meeting!

We have an awesome group of leaders in our organization, but we do need other retirees to join us. If you are a member and want to jump in... even into the Presidency, you could handle it because of all the support that would be surrounding you. Yes, I know many of you have leadership talent! Don't hesitate! Call Carol Caughron, our nominations chair, to say you would like to run for this position. You can reach her at 330-606-6909!

I want to thank Johnnette Curry, our VP in charge of programs, for taking over for me at our July 13, 2022, Management/Board meeting. Thanks to Judy Mervine for assisting Johnnette when needed, and a big thanks to Vicky Shaw for volunteering to receive the reservations for our September 20th, 2022, Luncheon/Meeting! Christine Bean has offered to help Vicky in any way she needs. Many thanks to Carolyn Vogenitz for taking care of the reservations when Ruby was unable to do so, and Vicky Shaw helped Carolyn at that time too!

Heard from the Grapevine that the July Management/Board Meeting was excellent!

Members were excited and shared so much. This makes me know that SCRTA will do well without me. We just need someone to move up from their present position...or one of our members, not actively involved now, realize they could do the job for at least a year. All the officers and chairs still have one more year to complete. Since I will be completing seven years of being President at the end of this year, the New President only has one year to complete my term in office.

Johnnette Curry, our VP in charge of Programs, has a very interesting program prepared for our September meeting. This should be fun, educational, and interesting!

You will be happy to know that another \$50.00 Gift Card will be given out to one of our members who brings the most guests. Your guests do not have to be teachers; however, retired teachers are especially welcomed. If there should be a tie for this special gift, the win will go to the member who

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has the most retired teachers among their guests! Obviously, these guests would be eligible to join SCRTA!

For those who did not see the obituary for our dear Ruby Winter, take time to read our Chaplain Rebecca Moore's Memorial Tribute to her. To say Ruby will be missed...is an understatement.

Hope to see many of you on Tuesday, September 20, 2022!

As always,

Mary Lou



SEPTEMBER 20, 2022 SCRTA PROGRAM



A special program has been planned for the general luncheon meeting on September 20, 2022, 12:00 noon at Guy's Party Center. A group of SCRTA members will share some entertaining stories straight from their teaching careers and a special guest is also included. Come and bring a friend to enjoy this presentation.

Johnnette S. Curry

1st Vice President and Program Chairman

SCRTA MANAGEMENT BOARD



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

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

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

Past President - Paul Dimascio (330-882-4738)

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

Treasurer - Paul Green (330-733-7311)

Asst. Treasurer/Membership - Jackie Hovey
(330-940-9147)

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

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

Travel - Carolyn Vogenitz (330-645-9928)

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

Nominating Committee: 3 elected members

Carol Caughron (330-745-1776), Micki Lavis (330-854-3054) and Phyllis Lewis (330-342-3550); **2**

Members at Large Informative and Protective Services—**OPEN; Community Service** - Christine Bean (330-784-4575)

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

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

Chaplain - Rebecca Moore (330-497-9362)

Akron City
Barberton City
Copley-Fairlawn City
Coventry Local
Cuyahoga Falls City
Field Local
Green Local
Hudson City

Summit County City and Local School Districts

Manchester Local
Mogadore Local
Nordonia Hills City
Norton City
Revere Local
Springfield Local
Stow-Munroe Falls City

Tallmadge City
Twinsburg City
Woodridge Local

*Please consider inviting
retired teachers in Summit
County to visit/join SCRTA!*

"A Teachers Heart Never Retires"

IN MEMORIAM



RUBY WINTER

I joined SCRTA at the invitation of a friend. After attending a few meetings, I began part-time curriculum work and volunteered in Canton City where I eventually spent up to four days a week in various elementary schools. It didn't leave much time for SCRTA luncheon meetings.

In 2016 I started back to SCRTA and was greeted by a beautiful woman named Ruby Winters. I am told Ruby had been the luncheon coordinator for decades. She always made me feel happy to have shown up for SCRTA. She would smile and remind me that her daughter and I shared our name.

Ruby died June 19 at the age of 82. I was surprised to learn her age. She was a beautiful woman and had such a cheerful disposition that in my mind she was much younger.

Ruby taught third grade at Memorial Elementary in Barberton for thirty-four years. She was adored as shown by comments made on the funeral home's guestbook page by friends, families, co-workers, and even former students.

I wasn't surprised to learn about her many parties, seemingly tireless hostess duties, being there for her family and volunteering throughout the area. Her family listed many organizations, though not all, that benefited from Ruby's giving of her time and talents. She and her husband could have retired to Florida full time, but he knew she would not want to give up her important work here. She did so much it

is taking several others to fill voids caused by her absence.

Many of you came to know her through AARP, Children's Hospital, the Civic Theatre, and other area organizations. When I read in her notice the statement, "...she taught us love, grace, kindness, and patience..." the Fruit of the Spirit came to mind. In Galatians 5:22-23 (NRSV), the fruit contains "...love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control." It was easy to see these qualities in our friend.



You may have heard "The Dash" poem by Linda Ellis. It was somewhat popularized by Senator Bob Dole and read at his funeral. It is a lovely story that gives meaning to how we spend our days between our dates of birth and death. The dash refers to the punctuation between the two years on one's death notice or gravestone.

The poet asks us to think not about how long the person lived but how the life was spent. She emphasizes what gives us true happiness such as spending time with loved ones and fulfilling dreams, making an effort to put a smile on someone's face and helping people in need. She asks us to think about living our "dash" to create memories for our loved ones to cherish. Ruby certainly left a multitude of stories in her dash! She is already greatly missed.

In memory of Ruby a contribution from SCRTA was made to Friends of Children's Hospital. You can find her obituary online.

<https://www.schermesserfh.com/>

*Rebecca Moore,
SCRTA Chaplain and friend*



**GETTING TO KNOW
HOWARD AND JOHNNETTE CURRY**



Howard and Johnnette are lifelong residents of the Akron area. Both attended Akron Public Schools, with Howard graduating from East High School and Johnnette graduating from Buchtel High School. They became a couple after meeting at an Akron City Series Football Game in the old Rubber Bowl.

After Howard graduated from the University of Akron with B.S Degree in Electronic Technology Engineering, he worked for the Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company for 42 years as an Electronic Specialist.

Johnnette retired from Akron Public Schools after 35 years, last working as a school building principal.

Howard as a sports enthusiast coached girls' softball, was varsity coach of Buchtel Girls Basketball and served as a college football official in the BIG EAST Conference.

Through the years, they have enjoyed working together as Sunday school teachers, camp counselors, preschool teachers, and election poll judges. The Curry's enjoy traveling across the United States in a motorhome, camping in places like Yellowstone, Grand Tetons, Grand Canyon, Mt. Rushmore, West Middlesex Pennsylvania and cruising to various islands with family and friends.

Hobbies include attending Broadway shows, local plays, Gospel concerts and the Akron Symphony

Orchestra.

Both are active in their Greek organizations: Johnnette in Delta Sigma Theta Sorority and Howard in Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity.

Both are active members of the Arlington Church of God, serving as the Senior Sunday School Class teachers and as members of the Diaconate Board.

Their pride and joy include three adult children and three grandchildren. They are looking forward to celebrating fifty-two years of marriage this summer.



Dear Friends at the Teachers Association,

Thank you so much for your generous donation of toiletries and cleaning supplies for our Safe Landing Youth Shelter! In these days of uncertainty, we are so appreciative for friends like you who selflessly work to make this world a better place for our youth. The kids will benefit greatly because of your generosity. We are so grateful for your friendship and giving spirit to our program. Our kids are blessed because of your kindness.

Thank you once again for your generous gift and for joining with us in reaching out to the many children and youth in our community with special needs.

D. Fair, Ph. President

Breanna M. Whirrett, Director of Development.

YOU CAN
make a difference

Scholarship News

2022 Scholarship Winners ... Kady and Kathryn



Vicky Shaw, **Kady Bragg**, **Kathryn Swanson**, Mary Lou Swartz, Judi Hill



BE ON THE LOOKOUT AT THE NOVEMBER 15TH

SCRTA LUNCHEON MEETING FOR A

SPECIAL SCHOLARSHIP FUNDRAISER!!!



ORTA is celebrating its **75th Anniversary** from 4 - 7 pm on **October 12, 2022** at the Doubletree Inn in Worthington, Ohio. The agenda of planned activities will be light. Speakers will include members of the STRS Board of Trustees. Refreshments will be available. If you are interested in representing our SCRTA Chapter, please contact President Mary Lou Swartz (234-678-0747) for more details ... asap.



We want to welcome 3 new members: **Jim Perge**, **John Robishaw**, both retired from Akron Public Schools, and **Gary Lansinger** who retired from Coventry Schools.

All paying members are encouraged to send in their 2022 dues at this time. 42 members have paid already. If you are not sure if you have paid this year, please email or call to continue receiving our Newsletter. Please fill out the membership form in the newsletter and return it to me with a check made out to SCRTA for \$40 (SCRTA keeps \$10 and \$30 is sent to ORTA).

Jackie Hovey

Membership & Assistant Treasurer

330-940-9147

jhoveysue@gmail.com



Newsletter Mailing
Luncheon Planning
Leadership Role

*Contact Jackie Hovey or any
Management Board Member ...
if you are interested in helping!*



STRS "Broken Beyond Repair?" You Decide

"Our pension system is broken, and it's broken beyond repair...Active teachers have the worst deal in America; they pay in more than their pensions are worth...Retirees are getting far less than what they were promised...Everyone involved is getting shafted except the people who work at STRS; those people have the best deal in America."

*Robin Rayfield, Executive Director
Ohio Retired Teachers Association*

The comments above were part of Robin Rayfield's YouTube presentation announcing ORTA's STRS Board endorsements in this past spring's election. All of ORTA's endorsed candidates—**Julie Sellers**, **Steve Foreman** and **Liz Jones** (ret)—defeated incumbent Board members. These same candidates were also endorsed by STRS Ohio Watchdogs and Fix My Pension. Both the Watchdogs and Fix My Pension are home to the unsubstantiated accusations regurgitated by Rayfield in his YouTube remarks. Fix My Pension in particular has played fast and loose with the truth (they've lied); problem is, the people and/or the organizations responsible for the site remain anonymous.

Nevertheless, now that all three groups' candidates have won and will soon take their seats on the STRS Board, we will be watching to see what dynamic leadership and actions they bring to the table to fix the "broken beyond repair" retirement system to which we belong.

In the meantime, the Ohio Retirement Study

Council (ORSC) doesn't appear to be in lockstep with the appraisal of STRS by Rayfield et. al. The ORSC is the official state agency charged with overseeing and policing the operation of all of Ohio's pension systems. They are responsible for advising and informing the state legislature on all matters relating to benefits, funding, investment and administration of all five systems. They have their own independent actuary and investment consultants who conduct reviews of each of the retirement systems independent of the systems' own actuaries.

On May 12, 2022, the ORSC hosted **Jim Voytko** of RVK, one of the nation's largest, fully independent, employee-owned investment consulting firms based in Portland, Oregon. Voytko has over 40 years' experience working with corporate and public pension plans. In addition to presenting investment performance reviews to ORSC members, Voytko and others responded to questions about claims made about STRS like those in Mr. Rayfield's endorsement video and elsewhere on social media.

ORSC Chairman **Phil Plummer** (R-Dayton) asked Mr. Voytko for his expert opinion about the claims that STRS was a "poor performer" and "the worst (pension) system in the country." Mr. Voytko said he was "astonished" to hear such a charge and that he would like to hear the analysis leading to that conclusion, and that nothing in his report suggested that that was the case. When Plummer referred to the claim that STRS was "the worst performing pension system in the country," Voytko stated that the claim was "clearly not supported in the data." When asked by Plummer where the claims were coming from, ORSC staff member **Jeff Bernard** said that he had received numerous calls and emails on the claims and that staff concluded based on verifiable data that STRS was not a "poor performer." **Bernard further stated that he asked several individuals making the claims to provide information or verifiable data supporting the claims, but he was never provided with a response.**

One of the most ludicrous claims of the anti-STRS

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Legislation, continued from Page 6

crowd is that members only get 77 cents in return for each dollar they contribute to the system. When Plummer asked Bernard if that was correct, he responded by saying that the claim was "incorrect and verifiably wrong." Bernard further characterized the claim as "**verifiably false**" and stated that 1991, 2001 and 2011 retiree benefits exceed contributions after approximately two years, and that 2021 retirees will recoup all contributions within three years. (ORSC examines this data for retiree cohorts every ten years.)

Yet another debunked claim is the one alleging that STRS granted 6% pay raises to employees. If that is what Robin Rayfield had in mind when he said that people who work at STRS "have the best deal in America," both ORSC's Bernard and STRS CFO **Lynn Hoover** explained that STRS's fiscal year had a 27th pay date, making it appear that 6% raises were granted. This phenomenon is commonplace in workplaces that pay every two weeks instead of semi-monthly. Many Akron retirees may recall years in which they received a 27th pay before the district moved to paying employees semi-monthly.

The ORSC addressed other inaccurate claims against STRS, among them data manipulation, transparency, etc. Those interested in diving deeper into this information to conclude for themselves how "broken beyond repair" STRS is or is not can visit the ORSC website at www.orsc.org. Click on "Meetings," then "Meeting Archive," then "ORSC May 12, 2022 Minutes" under the "Tuesday, May 24" agenda.

It is interesting to note that, to our knowledge, not one of the newly elected Board members disavowed or refuted any of the "verifiably false" claims of their endorsers, including ORTA, particularly when the claims appeared in the endorsement announcement.

H.B. 601 Seeks to Raise Employer Contribution Rate

State Reps **Mary Lightbody** (D-19) and **Adam**

Miller (D-17) have introduced legislation that would allow STRS and SERS to increase the percentage of payroll they require employers to contribute to their pension plans. Lightbody and Miller are both from the Columbus area. The bill, introduced on March 21 and referred to the House Insurance Committee on March 29, is co-sponsored by 13 representatives, all of whom are D's. There are no R co-sponsors.

Under current law, STRS is permitted to charge (and it does) employers up to 14% of the earnings of employees who are STRS members. H.B. 601 increases that percentage incrementally to 18% over an 8-year period by .5% steps annually between July 1, 2024 and July 1, 2030. The bill does not mandate that the state fund the additional costs to school districts. The cost of any increase in the employer contribution percentage under this bill would come from a district's general fund.

The bill includes a provision requiring STRS to apply an annual COLA to the first \$30,000 of a recipient's benefit amount and it prohibits STRS from reducing the COLA below 1% for that first \$30,000. There is no provision in the bill, as there is in current law, to allow STRS to suspend the COLA completely to preserve the fiscal integrity of the System.

Bill Siegferth,

SCRTA Legislative Chair/2nd Vice President



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

August/September



2022

SCRTA Website
www.summitcountyrta.org

Leroy Martin - Webmaster
lmartin561@gmail.com



**(See the ShelterCare thank you letter
on page 4 of this newsletter.)**

Please don't forget to bring 5 or more items to the
September luncheon for our community service
project. Thank you!

Christine Bean, Community Service Chairman



**September 20, 2022... SCRTA /ORTA General
Luncheon Meeting ... 12 noon at Guy's Party
Center**

**October 4, 2022 (Tuesday) ... SCRTA
Management Board Meeting ... 9:30 am at the
AEA Bldg.**

**November 15, 2022 ...SCRTA /ORTA General
Luncheon Meeting ... 12 noon at Guy's Party
Center**

"A Teacher's Heart Never Retires"

SCRTA JUNE 2022



Balance Forward \$185.00

Dues for ORTA \$90.00

Meals \$1,000

Donations \$15.00

Fund Transfer from Credit Union \$2,000

Remainder of funds from the Credit Union \$3,792.63

41 to 62 Transfer \$1,000

Total Income \$8,082.63

The balance is high because we closed the account at the Credit Union.

Expenses

Dues to ORTA \$240,

Meals \$972.50

Postage \$100.00

Scholarship \$1,000

Door Prizes \$60.00

Total Expense \$2,372.50

Net \$5,710.13

(Closing the CD in the Credit Union leaves a high balance.)

Paul Green, SCRTA Treasurer

SCRTA / ORTA GENERAL LUNCHEON MEETING

Tuesday, September 20, 2022

Guy's Party Center

500 East Waterloo Road, Akron, OH 44319

12 Noon

Price: \$20.00

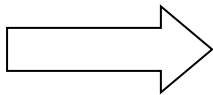
DOOR PRIZES AND A SPECIAL PRIZE

Bring 5 or more items for the Community Service Project and receive an extra door prize ticket. There will be a special prize for the person who brings the most guests to this meeting.

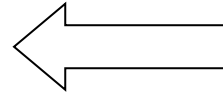
The meal entrées are Beef Tips, Chicken Paradise, and Rigatoni with Meat Balls. Along with the entrées, they will be serving potatoes, green beans, salad, rolls/butter, and desert. Coffee, tea or lemonade are included with your meal. Tax & tip are included.

Clip this reservation form and send to: Vicky Shaw, 1372 Hammel St., Akron, OH 44306

Phone: (330-773-5862)

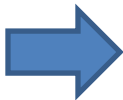


LUNCHEON RESERVATION



NAME _____ PHONE # _____

Please make checks **payable to SCRTA** and send to **Vicky Shaw**. She must receive this reservation form and your check by **Friday, September 16, 2022**



Our luncheon meetings are 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 pay ORTA directly _____

I am an ORTA LIFE member _____
School District _____

BRING THIS FORM WHEN PAYING DUES **MAKE ALL CHECKS PAYABLE TO SCRTA.**
Check # _____ Email: _____

BY MAIL SEND TO: JACKIE HOVEY 1085 COOKHILL CIRCLE, AKRON, OH 44312