



Retiree Advocate



STAY CONNECTED • BE PROTECTED • ENJOY BENEFITS

IT'S THAT TIME AGAIN!

I am very pleased to welcome our newest addition to the CTA/NEA-Retired Board of Directors! Gretchen Lipow will represent Region I (the northwestern part of the state) on our Board and at CTA State Council. Gretchen was the guiding light in the formation of the ALCOSTA-Retired chapter and has been our liaison to the ALCOSTA Service Center Council. She also has a long history of fighting for students, teachers and public education.

I would also like to welcome all of the new retirees who are joining us for the first time, and I would like to offer up a couple of suggestions. First, use your initial year of membership to become acquainted with the MANY benefits that are available - visit ctamemberbenefits.org and neamb.org. One trip to either website can easily save you the cost of your membership through the many discounts offered. You will also learn how to access CTA's Group Legal Services and Disaster Relief Fund.

Second, if we have a local retired chapter near you, join it! You will be able to meet with old friends and make new ones. You can stay on top of local educational and pension issues as well as participate in community and political events (only if you want to). Most of our locals have luncheons and outings that interest retirees. In this issue, we have included a list of our local retired chapters along with their contact information. If there isn't one near you, let us help you create one!

By now, most of you have probably heard of the Reed/DeMao initiative that would do serious damage to CalSTRS and to the retirement of public educators throughout California. Mr. Reed still has time to change the initiative, so we hesitate to be too specific about what is in it, but we can say **DON'T SIGN ANY PETITIONS THAT TALK ABOUT VOTER EMPOWERMENT OR PUBLIC EMPLOYEE PENSIONS!** We'll have plenty more on this subject in the months ahead.



Friendly Reminder! If you are a Pre-Retired member who has retired this year, please let CTA Membership know in order to change your active status to retired. Email membership@cta.org or call 650-552-5278.

Alen Ritchie
PRESIDENT
CTA/NEA-Retired

MEDICARE TURNS FIFTY - AND IS DOING WELL

By Ed Foglia, District 2 Director

Medicare is well-managed, working for millions of seniors, and is celebrating its 50th birthday! Regardless of the constant attacks by critics, the latest research shows that this federal government, single-payer medical plan for seniors is a sound investment for America.

World-renowned cardiologist Dr. Harlan Krumholz published the results of a five-year study

Hospitalization rates fell 24% from 2009 to 2013, and patients were 45% less likely to die within a month and 22% less likely within a year following hospitalization. According to Krumholz, this is a result of making sure that hospitals are safer, and that treatments are more timely and effective. Hospitals and staffs have been instrumental in the dramatic improvement in patient

Medicare now covers many preventative services and seniors can get a free yearly "wellness" visit.

on Medicare coverage which demonstrated a dramatic drop in deaths and Medicare costs. According to Krumholz, "It's jaw dropping finding. We didn't expect to see such a remarkable improvement over time." The objective of the study was to track the trends in mortality, hospitalizations and expenditures in the Medicare fee-for-service population between 1999 and 2013.

The study included the medical records of over 68 million Medicare patients who are in traditional fee-for-service or Medicare Advantage programs. This scientific study did not include patients in Managed Care programs which account for 29% of the people covered under Medicare.

care and survival. Newer drugs and medical care also are contributing to longer life. Additionally, there has been almost a 15% drop in Medicare costs per patient at a time when our country is spending more on health care.

The Affordable Care Act has had a dramatic impact on Medicare coverage. Medicare now covers many preventive services and seniors can get a free yearly "wellness" visit. Also, the Part-D prescription drugs "donut hole" will be completely closed by 2020. The life of the Medicare Trust fund has been extended to at least 2029 due to the reduction in waste, fraud, abuse and Medicare costs.

Medicare is definitely a successful government program which is good for our senior citizens and good for America.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President

Alen Ritchie

938 Nottingham Drive
Redlands, CA 92373
Home: 909-793-9229
Email: alenritchie@verizon.net

Vice President

Marc Sternberger

3015 Mayhew Court
Walnut Creek, CA 94597
Home: 925-937-1824
Cell: 925-323-3631
Email: marcpea@aol.com

Secretary-Treasurer

Frank Tarantino

1480 Edgehill Drive
Chula Vista, CA 91913-2982
Cell: 619-985-5508
Email: fatarantino@cox.net

District 1 Director & State Council Rep

Gretchen Lipow

2242 Alameda Avenue
Alameda, CA 94501
Home: 510-846-5465
Cell: 510-814-9592
Email: gretchenlipow@comcast.net

District 2 Director & State Council Rep

Ed Foglia

201 Ravenwood Court
Granite Bay, CA 95746
Email: edndonna@surewest.net

District 3 Director & State Council Rep

Bonnie Shatun

4043 Pacheco Drive
Sherman Oaks, CA 91403
Email: bshatun@aol.com

District 4 Director & State Council Rep

Sharon Fitch Boudreau

292 Palmer Street, C-2
Costa Mesa, CA 92627
Home: 949-646-8606
Email: sharbou@aol.com

Ethnic Minority At-Large Director

Harris Kight-Moore

P.O. Box 1952
Idyllwild, CA 92549-1952
Home: 951-659-0196
Cell: 951-288-8022
Email: metalinefalls1@yahoo.com

EDITOR

Bonnie Shatun

Email: bshatun@aol.com

PHOTOGRAPHS

Retired Members

RETIRED AND STUDENT MEMBERS JOIN TOGETHER FOR THE FIRST ANNUAL NEA LEGACY PROJECT

by Harris Kight-Moore, Ethnic Minority At-Large Director

Just as in the movie when sharks join tornados to destroy Miami, the NEA Student Teacher Program and NEA-Retired joined together to attack a major problem in Osceola County, FL - the health of elementary school students. About half the 200 education volunteers with me were members of NEA-Retired! Many others flowed from the local community health and safety support groups.

On June 30, estimated 400 students from six different elementary school Summer Activity Programs converged upon Osceola High School with water bottles in-hand weathering the Florida heat and humidity. There were 20 activity stations for them to enjoy. Mounted Search and Rescue teams gave horseback rides, a health club had kids Zumba-ing for prizes, and, in my booth kids pedaled a bike-adapted, healthy smoothie blender to mix their own yogurt smoothie! During lunch, NEA Student Teachers asked me a lot of questions about how

to be strong as a first year teacher, and stand up to those dictating their craft or criticizing their profession. I overheard many similar conversations in the lunchroom. Kudos to the local NEA Student Teacher Program for uniting with NEA members to provide a wonderful program for students!



ESEA REAUTHORIZATION UPDATE

by KC Walsh, Former Chairperson of CTA's ESEA Reauthorization Workgroup

At long last, Congress is edging toward the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) also known as "No Child Left Behind." After much work by diligent educators and our lobbyists, the Senate passed a version that is closer to the principles, we as educators, support. A conference committee to merge the Senate and House bills will be appointed when Congress reconvenes.

There are still many roadblocks to overcome and this Congress doesn't seem to move quickly to enact legislation. NEA has three major priorities:

- Include student and/or school support state accountability to create an opportunity "dashboard"

- Reduce the amount of standardized testing in schools and decouple high-stakes decision making and statewide standardized tests
- Ensure that educators' voices are part of the decision making at the federal, state and local levels

What can you do to help? You can schedule a meeting with your legislator at their home office. You can also go to GetESEARight.com to send an email or call 1-866-331-7233 to let our legislators know we need them to finish this job to get ESEA done and to get it right. As our colleagues still in the classroom have returned for another school year, we retirees can really help them out by having those meetings, sending those emails and making those phone calls.

COME TO A CARA CONVENTION

by Pat Ryan, CARA Representative

As members of CTA/NEA-Retired, you are also members of the California Alliance for Retired Americans, and you are invited to attend the CARA 12th Annual Convention. It will be held on October 19-20, 2015 at the Doubletree-Hilton in Ontario, CA. There will be great speakers, workshops, entertainment, and a celebration of the anniversaries of Medicare and Social Security. Early bird registration (prior to October 1) is \$125 and includes convention materials, lunch and dinner on October 19, and breakfast on October 20.

For more information go to www.CaliforniaAlliance.org or call CARA at 510-663-4086.

NEA-RETIRED DELEGATES MEET IN ORLANDO

By Marc Sternberger, Vice President

NEA-Retired Annual Meeting

CTA/NEA-Retired's 16 elected delegates officially represented us at the NEA-Retired Annual Meeting on June 28-29 held in Orlando, FL. Another 17 CTA/NEA-Retired members attended as observers.

The Annual Meeting began with an NEA Officers Panel entitled "Visions of the Future of NEA-Retired." NEA President Lily Eskelsen Garcia thanked retirees for helping unite NEA members through programs such as intergenerational mentoring, for continuing to be active in the political process, and for "leading the way on equity, access and opportunity in public education." Vice President Becky Pringle and Secretary-Treasurer Princess Moss also commented on NEA-Retired's consistent growth and participation in community activities meant to strengthen public education.

Mary Kusler, NEA Government Relations Director, reported on current happenings in Congress with specific attention to issues important to NEA-Retired members. She spoke on our successful efforts to find sponsors for H.R. 973/S1561, legislation to eliminate GPO/WEP, and explained NEA's positions and strategy on this issue. NEA's continuing fights to protect Social Security, Medicare, the Affordable Care Act, and to defend Defined Benefit Pension Plans in Washington, DC and throughout the county were also emphasized in her report.

Other highlights of the Annual Meeting were the election of our own Alen Ritchie, CTA/NEA-Retired President, to the Executive Council of NEA-Retired and the recipient of the NEA-Retired First Place for Established State Newsletter Award won for our CTA/NEA-Retired Retiree Advocate. Our Newsletter Editor Bonnie Shatun accepted the award for the Association.

NEA Representative Assembly

Sixteen CTA/NEA-Retired delegates were among the roughly 8,000 attending the 94th NEA Representative Assembly held July 1-6 in Orlando. NEA President Lily Eskelsen Garcia opened the NEA's 153rd Annual Meeting with a keynote focused on this year's theme "Unite, Inspire, Lead."

This year, much of the meeting, speeches, and many of the New Business Items (NBIs) and Resolutions centered on Human and Civil Rights impacting American Society in general and Public Education in particular. NBIs were emotionally discussed and approved while addressing institutional racism, supporting the "Black Lives Matter" movement and reaffirming that "NEA shall lead in fighting inequity, racism and educational injustice." NBIs addressing the effects of income inequality and tax fairness on students were passed as were those reasserting NEA's position that "affordable, comprehensive health care, including prescription drug coverage, is the right of every person."

Several NBIs specific to retirees/retirement were approved, including NEA publishing articles detailing the economic value of Defined Benefit vs. Defined Contribution pensions while advocating for them. A related Legislative Amendment, opposing mandatory defined contribution pension plans, was also approved. Additionally, the assembly approved NEA's funding of state staff to attend NEA-Retired's Organizing Conference. The latter was passed after it was noted that "NEA-Retired is the fastest growing affiliate of NEA."

Thanks to CTA/NEA-Retired volunteers, Adeline Blasingame, Roslyn Jones and Harris Kight-Moore, who served as microphone monitors during the Representative Assembly.

NEA-RETIRED MEETINGS



CTA/NEA-Retired President Alen Ritchie thanked the delegates to the NEA-Retired Annual Meeting in Orlando, FL for electing him to serve on the NEA-Retired Executive Council.



At the NEA-Retired Annual Meeting our newsletter the CTA/NEA-Retired Retiree Advocate was awarded First Place for an Established State Newsletter. Newsletter Editor Bonnie Shatun (center) accepted the award for the Association. Presenting it to her are Executive Council Member Jean Dobashi (left) and President Tom Curran (right).



The NEA-Retired Annual Meeting began with the three NEA officers discussing "Vision of the Future of NEA-Retired." Pictured from left are NEA Retired President Tom Curran, NEA President Lily Eskelsen Garcia, NEA Vice President Becky Pringle and NEA Secretary-Treasurer Princess Moss.

NOMINATIONS ARE OPEN FOR THE 2015-16 ELLEN LOGUE WHO (WE HONOR OURS) AWARD

Annually, CTA/NEA-Retired honors one member who has continued to be active in their retirement by exhibiting leadership in the Association, in public education and in the community. The recipient will be recognized at our annual CTA/NEA-Retired Issues Conference to be held on March 3-4 in Torrance, CA. Past winners of the award are:

- 2015 - Bonnie Shatun • 2014 - Val Muchowski
- 2013 - Orval Garrison • 2012 - Tim Jenkins

Nomination forms can be found online at www.cta.org/retired. If you would prefer to receive the form in the mail, please call CTA/NEA-Retired at 650/552.5561 or email CTA-Retired@cta.org.



CTA/NEA-Retired Members at the NEA-Retired Annual Meeting in Orlando.

YOUR MEMBER BENEFITS INCLUDE DISASTER RELIEF

By Bonnie Shatun, District 3 Director

The recent wild fires remind us just how vulnerable we are to natural disasters in California. As an annual or lifetime member of CTA/NEA-Retired, you are eligible to receive financial assistance if you suffer significant losses due to fire, earthquake, flood or other natural disaster beyond what is covered by insurance.

The four types of grants are:

- **Standard Grant:** CTA/NEA-Retired members may receive up to \$1,500 for significant economic hardship related to damage to their primary residence, displacement or disruption of required utilities.
- **Catastrophic Damage Grant:** Recipients of the Standard Grant may be eligible for up to another \$1,500 if damages exceed \$50,000.

- **Temporary Displacement Grant:** A grant of up to \$500 may be available for members who are displaced from their primary residence as the result of a disaster, but do not meet the requirement for a Standard Grant.
 - **School Site Grant:** Members may receive up to \$500 for damage to or loss of personal property in the classroom. This would be helpful to members who may substitute after retiring or work at a school in another capacity.
- Interested members may contact their local office, the nearest Regional Resource Center, or www.cta.org for more information or a claim form.

2015-16 CTA/NEA-RETIRED LOCAL CHAPTERS

REGION I

ALCOSTA (Alameda, Contra Costa)

Kelly Sandler, President
7815 Foothill Knolls Drive, Pleasanton 94588
925-202-5342 • ksandler1@comcast.net

Central Coast Counties (Monterey, San Benito, Santa Cruz, S. Santa Clara)

Millie Dodd, President
82 River Pine, King City 93930
805-712-2951 • millie.something@gmail.com

Northbay

(Lake, Marin, Mendocino, Sonoma)
Pat Sabo, President
203 Manka Circle, Santa Rosa 95403
707-478-2047 • p.sabo@att.net

UESF-Retired (San Francisco)

Diane Doe, President
170 Topeka Avenue, San Francisco 94131
415-822-2099 • ddoe@mac.com

REGION II

Delta (San Joaquin)

Josie Malik, President
2420 Pheasant Run Circle, Stockton 25207
209-951-4224 • josiemalik1@gmail.com

Sacramento Area

(Alpine, Amador, Calaveras, El Dorado, Sacramento, Tuolumne, Yolo)
Kathy Villarreal, President
4213 Berrendo Drive, Sacramento 95864
916-483-2823 • sctaretiredteachers@gmail.com

Stanislaus (Stanislaus)

Bob McDonough, President
2825 Poppyatch Drive, Modesto 95354
209-581-1220 • brm50@att.net

Tulare-Kings (Tulare, Kings)

Rod Gerbrandt, Organizer
801 Ramblewood Court, Dinuba 93618
559-591-7960 • rodhm@yahoo.com

Sierra/Kern (Kern, Tulare)

Pam Baugher, President
313 Panorama Drive, Bakersfield 93305
661-324-3668 • scrubby@aol.com

REGION III

Bay Valley (Los Angeles)

Kathy Cleary, President
3624 Rosewood Avenue, Los Angeles 90066
310-398-6644 • regularbil@aol.com

Compton (Compton)

Muriel Brooks, President
1725 Newport Avenue, Pasadena 91103
626-798-1668 • ceateach@aol.com

Southeastern (Los Angeles)

Marilyn Russell-Bittle, President
141 Syracuse Walk, Long Beach 90803
562-434-7113 • mmrbret2002@aol.com

UTLA-Retired (Los Angeles)

John Perez, President
8210 Bellingham Avenue,
North Hollywood 91605
818-768-7431 • vpapabear46@aol.com

REGION IV

Orange (Orange, Los Angeles)

Carol Comparsi, President
403 16th Street, Huntington Beach 92648
714-536-2909 • carolcom714@aol.com

San Diego (San Diego)

Norma Heeter, President
PO Box 27656, San Diego 92198
760-480-9888 • buckeyebabe1966@gmail.com

San Gorgonio (San Bernardino, Riverside)

Carol Robb, President
22641 Lark Street, Grand Terrace 92313
909-783-2404 • carolrobb@aol.com

South County (San Diego)

Sara Wood, President
1372 California Street, Imperial Beach 90803
619-424-7742 • sewood@cox.net

SHARILYNN GARDELLA RUSSO MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND

The CTA/NEA-Retired Board of Directors awards annual scholarships named in memory of Sharilynn G. Russo. The funds provide financial aid to students pursuing a college degree, credential or certification for a Speech Pathology and/or Audiology-related career in public education from an accredited institution of higher education. With these CTA Scholarships, we hope to address the severe shortage in this field by encouraging students to enroll in these programs and help support those already in SLP and/or SLPA programs so they may eventually aid this under served population of students.

DONATIONS

Gifts may be in honor and recognize someone or as memorials

This Donation is Made

In Honor of

In Memory of

Name _____

A celebration or memorial card will be sent with no mention of amount to the person you name below:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Please make checks payable to:

CTA Foundation for Teaching and Learning with the following notation -

Sharilynn G. Russo Memorial Scholarship Fund in the memo line of your check



Checks should be mailed to:

Frank Tarantino, 1480 Edgehill Drive, Chula Vista, CA 91913

Honors and Memorials will appear in the Advocate Newsletter (amounts will not appear)

Your gift is tax deductible. To receive a receipt, please provide your information below:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____



Retiree Advocate

California Teachers Association
1705 Murchison Drive, Burlingame, CA 94010

Presorted
First-Class Mail
U.S. Postage
PAID
San Francisco, CA
Permit #11882

SENIOR HEALTH ISSUE: GETTING PAST LONELINESS

By Sharon Fitch Boudreau, District 4 Director

A report in the 2012 census found that half of the women age 75 and older are widows, and the number increases to nearly 75% for women age 85 and older. And, it isn't only women who experience loss. The death of a partner is devastating for men as well. Loneliness is not limited to those who have lost a partner, but you can turn it around with a few positive steps. There is hope.

FIRST:

Turn to others for help. Call on friends and explore a few support groups until you find the one that fits. Seek out help from senior centers, clergy or professionals in the medical fields. It may not be easy, but you have to want to change. You have to get up no matter how you feel. Force yourself to do something. Meet with friends or do activities, even if you don't want to. THEN, if you keep at it, change will happen one day at a time.

SECOND:

Volunteering is often a panacea for loneliness and a rewarding activity for both the recipients and the volunteers. Ellie, a recent widow, was encouraged to volunteer at her local hospital. The hospital was full of bad memories for Ellie -- it was where her late husband spent so much time during his illness and where he died. She resisted because the place held such sadness, but finally called the volunteer coordinator. The coordinator wisely placed her in the maternity ward,

a place for new life. This gave her a sense of purpose again and a routine filled with activities.

THIRD:

Go back to things you used to do. Join a book club, take a trip planned for seniors or get back into cooking, gardening and having friends visit. Don't turn down those invitations to lunch or a movie that you initially might just want to skip.

Granted, not everyone wants a full social calendar. Some people enjoy their time alone while others want more interaction. Find the balance that works for you. To paraphrase from an article I read recently - We have to help ourselves. Even if you have people in your life who care about you, they can't do it for you. It's not always easy but you have to march through the down times to come out and see the light.

WHERE DO I GET MORE INFORMATION?

Your primary care physician, your clergy or a trusted friend would be a good place to start. Also, hospitals and skilled nursing facilities usually have social workers who can supply resources. Another source for senior issues is your local Council on Aging which provides programs such as "Reconnect" and the "Friendly Visitor" program as well as opportunities for volunteering.