WHY AM I SO BUSY?! I THOUGHT I RETIRED!!!

WOW!! There certainly have been some major events since my last column in May. Most notably for NEA/CTA was the long anticipated U.S. Supreme Court’s “Janus Decision”, which came down in late June, right before the NEA-Retired Annual Meeting and the NEA Representative Assembly. For those of you who are not familiar with this ruling, it immediately did away with “Fair Share” or “Agency Fee” requirements for public sector unions nationwide. From now on, NEA and CTA will be bargaining and protecting the rights of members as well as those who decide to take a “free ride” and not join or pay dues. Of course, dues paying members will be entitled to the many additional “Member Benefits” included with their CTA/NEA membership and non-members will not. But those who do not join will have the union’s contract protections for free! The result will be some significant cuts in NEA’s staff and programs and some at the CTA level. Although it’s still early to predict the exact impact on CTA/NEA-Retired. We expect immediate reduced funding, falling salaries and rising healthcare costs have caused hundreds of thousands of educators to take to the streets in West Virginia, Kentucky, Oklahoma, Colorado, Arizona, North Carolina and in many smaller communities.

It is now necessary for CTA Chapters to recruit and sign-up members, so I’m asking our retired members to help active chapters in membership recruitment activities whenever and wherever you are asked! “Who better to help recruit members than retired members who already voluntarily pay/paid dues to the organization because we understand the many benefits of being part of CTA and NEA?”

Calendars and plans are being made for the “new year”, new chapters are having initial meetings, and some inactive locals are being revitalized. Many have joined or recently become active because they see the value of belonging to CTA and NEA, organizations known for protecting retirees’ benefits, advocating for public education and educators and taking progressive political and social stances. Some have become more involved because of concerns for the future of public education and the next generation of students and educators. Volunteer opportunities, such as our “mentoring programs” have also inspired our members to step up. Still others are showing up to socialize with longtime colleagues and keep connected with friends with common interests.

Whatever your reason for belonging to CTA/NEA-Retired, whatever level of involvement you are looking for, there are opportunities awaiting you. Your fellow educators, active and retired, need and will value your expertise, time, and support. There are a myriad of activities that retirees and retired chapters have been engaging in to the benefit of Active Members, Active Chapters, Service Centers, other Retirees, and the Community. If there is not a local near you and you wish to become involved, email your CTA Retired Board Member (listed on page 2 by CTA Region).

**I’m also asking you all to get out and vote in November, especially to help elect Tony Thurmond as State Superintendent of Public Instruction. Remember the “SPI” sits on the CalSTRS Board of Directors, so we want educator friendly people there making decisions about our pensions.

By Bonnie Shatun, District 3 Director
BOARD REPORT
By KC Walsh, Secretary-Treasurer

CTA/NEA-Retired Board of Directors Meeting - June 1, 2018

Action Items:
• The 2018-19 CTA/NEA-Retired budget was approved.

Reports:
• There was an update on membership bylaw change that would allow NEA-Retired membership to qualify for CTA/NEA-Retired membership. Financial and legal impacts are being researched.
• Three Russo Scholarships were given to students from Orange and San Gorgonio Service Centers. Applicants were inspirational, it was difficult for the committee to choose.
• Marc attended the Service Chairs’ meeting, as usual, and reminded Chairs that retirees are available to help with campaign activities. Special thanks goes to our Chico chapter for doing an exceptional job helping with local phone banking. Chapters are asked to alert Marc to any changes in leadership in their chapters.
• Problems continue with the timely publishing and distribution of our ADVOCATE. Again, please note that latest issue is always available online at cta.org/retired as soon as the issue is print ready.
• Board members reported on attending service center meetings, local chapter meetings, field trips and end of year receptions. The organization continues to grow and strengthen statewide.
• Alen Ritchie, NEA Retired Executive Council member, reported that the elections system at the NEA Representative Assembly has been streamlined and will move very quickly. The amount of funding for grants has been cut by 15%. Lifetime NEA dues will be increased by $50 in 2019-20.
• Bonnie Shatun, our representative to CTA’s 2018 Campaign Workgroup, reminded each Board Member to work with chapter presidents to coordinate with our campaign activities. She stated that we definitely need to work hard to elect Tony Thurmond as Superintendent of Public Instruction since $15 million has been dumped into his opponent’s campaign. Bonnie also urged us to help with phone banking at this Council meeting.
• Harry Keiley, CalSTRS Board, thanked Ed Foglia for his tremendous advocacy to increase the death benefit. CTA State Council passed his recommendation and sent it to the CalSTRS Board which approved a 3.4% increase. The CalSTRS Board continues to work on the gun issue and is looking for engagement to influence manufacturers and retailers of semi-automatic weapons.
• Jennifer Baker, CTA Governmental Relations staff, reported that CTA’s relationship with CalSTRS continues to be strong. She shared that the pension reform changes are a 2% factor at age 62 rather than 60 and new members will face a 1% contribution increase.
• Harris Kight-Moore was celebrated with cake and cider in honor of his last meeting as the Ethnic Minority Board Member. Harris made this position what it is and is responsible for membership on the Civil Rights in Education Committee at Council and for ethnic minority scholarships.

Information Items:
• Our meetings are held on Friday afternoons at CTA State Council in the Santa Anita A Room of the Westin Bonaventure in Los Angeles. All members are welcome to attend. The next meeting will be Friday, October 26 at 1:30 p.m.
• Like us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/ctanearetired (no “membership” in Facebook required)

NOMINATIONS ARE OPEN FOR THE 2019 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 Feb. 28 – Mar. 1, 2019 at the Fairmont Hotel - San Jose.

Past winners of the award are:
• 2018 – Bob McDonough
• 2017 – Frank Tarantino
• 2016 – Arlene Pavey
• 2015 – Bonnie Shatun
• 2014 – Val Muchowski
• 2013 – Orval Garrison

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 650/552.5439 or email CTA-Retired@cta.org Deadline for submission is Friday, January 25, 2019
NEA-RETIRED DELEGATES MEET IN MINNEAPOLIS/ST. PAUL

By Marilyn Russell Bittle, President, Southeastern/CTA Retired

Thirty-five years of Service and Success” was the theme of the 35th NEA-Retired Annual Meeting which was held in St. Paul, MN June 27-28. Attending the conference were more than thirty CTA-Retired members including seventeen CTA/NEA-Retired delegates elected to represent our members at the NEA Representative Assembly (RA). The two-day meeting was packed with information and many calls to action.

In her opening statement, NEA-Retired President Sarah Borgman congratulated delegates on NEA-Retired’s years of continuing to advocate, support, serve and speak up for our students and colleagues and against threats to public education and our democracy. She added that we need to concentrate on the wellbeing and safety of children including immigrant children and the need for sensible gun laws.

One of the highlights of this conference was the opportunity to hear from NEA’s General Counsel Alice O’Brien. Since we met right after the Supreme Court decision was announced in Janus v. AFSCME, Alice spoke about its impact on working people. She stated that “Janus was an extreme and unprincipled decision and never before has this type of decision been decided using the First Amendment arguments... The Supreme Court ignored the view of states, municipalities, legislators, civil rights groups, unions and economists.” She shared that the Freedom Foundation has already sent information to members throughout the country on how to drop their membership. When asked what we could do as an organization, her answer was direct and simple. We must “ORGANIZE, ORGANIZE, ORGANIZE!”

At this meeting, thanks to the generous contributions to the Jack Kinnaman Scholarship fund, we were able to honor three outstanding college students with $2,500 scholarships. We also heard Committee Reports and took positions on New Business Items in preparation for the RA. And, CTA’s own Alen Ritchie was re-elected to the NEA Executive Committee.

The meeting concluded with the NEA officers joining the delegates to celebrate NEA-Retired’s 35 years of advocacy.

In June more than thirty members of CTA/NEA-Retired attended the NEA-Retired Annual Meeting in Minneapolis MN.

Attention Pre-Retired Members

If you retired this year, you must notify CTA membership by calling 650-552-5278 or send an email to membership@cta.org notifying them of your change in status. Otherwise, you will not be able to run for office or vote in CTA/NEA-Retired elections.
THE 2018 NEA REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY SETS THE COURSE FOR THE UPCOMING YEAR

By Karen Russell, CTA/NEA Retired Member and RA Delegate

CTA/NEA-Retired’s seventeen elected delegates to the 2018 NEA Representative Assembly joined more than 6,000 delegates from across the nation to participate in an inspiring, exciting and very busy seven days in Minneapolis, MN. This year’s NEA RA began with a very different patriotic opening ceremony. As a reflection of the times, several NEA members who were immigrants introduced themselves as educators and patriots. Our own CTA President Eric Heins was one of them. Eric and his family are from the Netherlands.

NEA President Lily Eskelsen Garcia opened the 97th NEA Representative Assembly with a keynote focused on the challenges facing educators. She said, “What we are facing is real. And it’s dangerous to public education and public service. It’s dangerous to our democracy; to protections for people who need and deserve protecting.”

Lily went on to say, “Billionaires are trumping the rights of working people to organize, are tearing families apart who are trying to escape violence and persecution, are selling our public schools to charter chains, and are demanding we stay silent and pretend that everything’s fine.” “But we are not staying silent...we are marching and we are speaking out.” The “Red for Ed Wave” started in West Virginia in February and spread to Kentucky, Oklahoma, Arizona, Colorado, and North Carolina.

Lily also spoke about the heartbreak of gun violence in our schools and about the brave students who are standing up and demanding change. She yielded some of her time to David Hogg, a recent graduate and survivor of the Parkland school shooting who said, “We are young and that means we don’t have to accept the status quo. And we never will. We intend to close the gap between the world as it is and what it should be.” Lily concluded her speech with a quote by Luke Skywalker. “You don’t win by destroying what you hate. You win by saving what you love.”

We also heard a addresses by NEA’s Executive Director John Stocks who spoke about the impact of the Janus decision and what we have to lose with an unfriendly Supreme Court. He reminded delegates that we, the NEA, have been at the forefront of positive change and standing up for human rights and for our students since our beginning, but we cannot do it alone. He urged us to lean in. “This is a time forge deep relationships with all who share our values. . . If we truly live by our values … we will always be on the right side of history … whether it is immigration, racism, gun violence, school funding, or economic justice.”

Delegates also heard from Mandy Manning the 2018 National Teacher of the Year, Dr. Loretta Ragsdell the NEA Higher Educator of the Year and Sherry Shaw ESP of the Year. (A full text of all speeches is available at https://ra.nea.org/speech/2018.)

In addition to listening to speeches, delegates discussed and voted on our Legislative Platform, changes to NEA Resolutions, Bylaws and Standing Rules and New Business Items (NBIs). NBIs set the course for what we want to accomplish in the coming year and this year there were 129 of them. Many centered around immigration issues, school environment, the Janus decision, safety in our schools and how to best support our educators and students. The delegates also elected CTA member Robert V. Rodriguez to a one-year term on the NEA Executive Committee.

If you or someone you know has been impacted by the recent fires in California please take advantage of the CTA Disaster Relief Fund. As a CTA/NEA-Retired member, you are eligible for the same support as active members.

The Standard Grant is up to $1,500 for significant economic hardship due to damage to the member’s primary residence, displacement or disruption in required utilities. If damages exceed $50,000, you may be eligible for up to another $1,500. If you were displaced due to a disaster for more than 7 days, you may be eligible for up to $500.

Visit CTAMemberBenefits.org/drf to read the qualifications in detail and to download/print an application. Completed applications must be first submitted to your local Retired Chapter President or to Marc Sternberger at Marcpea@aol.com and then to the FACT Foundation.

CTA/NEA-RETIRED MEMBERS ARE ELIGIBLE FOR CTA DISASTER RELIEF FUNDS
organizer, that we need to use authentic messaging and we need to tell our story. Also, educators have stepped up to run for office. In Kentucky alone, forty educators have filed to run for office. NEA has conducted several “See Educators Run” trainings for current or potential candidates.

On April 10, 2018, President Trump signed an executive order calling for the re-examination of all public assistance programs which do not require work to receive benefits or services. This is no doubt the first step in the Administration’s interest in entitlement reform. The recent tax cuts for the wealthy have increased the deficit and cuts to social programs are being looked at for cost savings. Social Security and Medicare are at risk.

The Government Pension Offset (GPO) and the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) continue to penalize educators and many other public employees in fifteen states. NEA is in full support of the Social Security Fairness Act of 2017 (S.915/H.R.1205) which would fully repeal both the GPO and the WEP. We do not support H.R.711 in its current form because, although it would help some, it would penalize even more workers than are currently hurt by the offsets.

NEA also supports the Social Security Expansion Act (S.427/H.R.1114) which would over time lift the cap on taxed income and use the increased revenue to increase Social Security benefits. To add to the problem, the Social Security Administration has been closing field offices across the country making it more difficult for new recipients to sign up for benefits.

The Fiscal Year 2019 Republican Budget Resolution proposes a $537 billion cut to Medicare creating higher out-of-pocket costs. Additional ideas being floated are replacing guaranteed Medicare with a voucher, requiring beneficiaries in the Part D “donut hole” to pay more and increasing the eligibility age from 65 to 67.

Yes, elections have consequences. We need to continue to fight for healthcare and a living wage and speak up for students and working families.

(Mary Kusler’s complete PowerPoint is available by going to www.nea.org/retired and clicking on the link in the middle of the page.)

"When we allow profit to take priority over children in public education, we fail to fulfill our constitutional duty to provide quality education to all children equally."

-Tony Thurmond

On May 15, Bay Valley Retired members marched in support of Inglewood Teachers Association members outside the “Factfinding” session over cuts to their health benefits. Pictured from left are ITA Vice President Aisha Royal, Bill Cleary, Kathy Cleary, Kate Duggan, Bonnie Shatun, and ITA President Aba Ngissah. Also marching that day were retired members Jack Foreman, Sandra Hickman and Gail Williams.
For years I have been sharing NEA Click & Save with members, telling them how to reduce costs for retail purchases and services. Although not exclusively a travel site, Click & Save allows you to book hotel rooms, buy entertainment tickets, purchase airline tickets, and do other travel related activity which will earn WOWPoints to help reduce costs for future purchases.

To get started, go to www.neamb.com, and then click on TRAVEL. At the menu on the left, under Guided Vacations, go to NEA Adventures for small group tours, Trafalgar Guided Vacations for travel specials with a 10% discount, and G Adventures for small groups with 15% discounts or special offer price.

Under Travel Discounts, NEA Vacations is a must explore. It tells you how you can earn “NEA Travel Dollars” to help lower the cost of future vacations including hotels, cruises, and guided tours. You can earn up to $1500 of Travel Dollars in one year and need to use them within a year or so. NEA Travel Dollars cannot be used for airfare.

If you are registered with NEA Member Benefits, you can call the NEA Vacations number to call 866-524-2807 to speak to an Account Manager who knows all about NEA Vacations. This person can help you make the most out of the travel discounts and perks available to members.

At the NEA Vacations site, there is an optional “Select Access” registry program for serious travelers. By paying a one-time enrollment, points are awarded which can be used to bring down the cost of tours, trips or cruises. “Select Access” and NEA Vacations are programs that can significantly reduce the costs of retiree travel experiences.

If this sounds confusing, as a CTA/NEA-Retired member, you need only call 866-524-2807 and ask to speak to an NEA Vacations representative. They are happy to explain how the programs work. Also, on the Travel Discounts/NEA Vacations page, there is a “Frequently Asked Questions” option with answers that I found very helpful.

MORE TIME TO TRAVEL? NEA MEMBER BENEFITS MAKES IT MORE AFFORDABLE

By Orval Garrison, Vice President

So, what do you do if you’d taught elementary school for thirty-five years in San Diego, held many leadership positions in the San Diego Teachers Association, CTA and NEA, have had four knee operations and rotator cuff surgery and are looking for a way to celebrate your seventy-fourth birthday? If you’re Richard Dryer, you go climb a mountain – not just any mountain, but the 10,834 foot Mt. San Jacinto above Palm Springs. And, this isn’t his first time, it’s his 100th time.

Rick first climbed Mt. San Jacinto as a Boy Scout leader with his two sons in 1983. Since then, he has hiked all over the world. His climbs have included the Stone Forest in China, the Canadian Rockies, the 18,200 foot Kala Patthar in Nepal, Mt. Whitney nine times, the Grand Canyon rim to rim eight times, and last year he hiked the Camino de Santiago, the 585 mile trip from France over the Pyrenees to Santiago, Spain.

When Rick was asked to reflect on what 100 climbs of Mt. San Jacinto would mean to him, the educator in him quantifies it. He said it would mean hiking a combined distance of 1,600 miles, a total elevation climbed of 453,500 vertical feet (85.89 miles), and 389,097 calories burned or the equivalent of 113 pounds of fat. And, that’s just the total for Mt. San Jacinto.

On June 16, when Rick made his 100th ascent of Mt. San Jacinto, he was accompanied by 30 of his good hiking friends. They came from Minnesota, Missouri, Washington, and two friends he’d met last year hiking the Camino de Santiago flew over from the Netherlands to join him.

The trip was a great success and it helped to kick off a scholarship program that Rick is organizing at his alma mater San Diego State. It’s for students who are the first in their family to go to college.

So, the next time you are faced with an obstacle, think of Rick Dryer. One of Rick’s favorite sayings, and he has a lot of them, is John Muir’s “Between every two pines is a doorway to a new world.”

SAN DIEGO RETIRED EDUCATOR RICHARD DRYER CELEBRATED HIS SEVENTY-FOURTH BIRTHDAY BY CLIMBING MT. SAN JACINTO – FOR THE 100TH TIME.

By Michael Green, CTA Retired Member

San Diego Retired educator Richard Dryer was the subject of an article titled “GO CLIMB A MOUNTAIN!” in the San Diego Retired Educator Bulletin. The article recounted his 100th ascent of Mt. San Jacinto and his remarkable hiking career.

Richard Dryer’s story is an inspiration to many. His passion for hiking and his dedication to education are characteristics that make him a true role model. His achievements not only demonstrate his love for adventure and exploration, but also his commitment to continuous learning and personal growth.

The San Diego Retired Educator Bulletin is a valuable resource for retired educators, offering a wealth of information on travel discounts, retirement planning, and personal development opportunities. It serves as a reminder of the many benefits that come with membership in a professional organization like the San Diego Teachers Association, CTA, and NEA.

In conclusion, Richard Dryer’s story is a testament to the power of passion and determination. It is a reminder that no matter how old we are, there is always something new to learn and discover. As educators, we can inspire our students to embrace life’s challenges and to always be curious about the world around them.

San Diego Retired Educator Richard Dryer celebrated his seventy-fourth birthday by climbing Mt. San Jacinto – for the 100th time.
2018 CTA/NEA-RETIRED SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED IN MEMORY OF SHARILYNN GARDELLA RUSSO

By Marc Sternberger, President

The CTA/NEA-Retired Scholarship Committee selected Chantel Harrison, Crystal Villaruz, and Allison Miner out of many qualified and deserving applicants, to be this year’s recipients of the Sharilynn Gardella Russo Memorial Scholarships.

Chantel Harrison earned a BA in Linguistics with a minor in Spanish from UCLA in 2016 and is enrolled in a Master’s Program in Communication Science and Disorders at Loma Linda University. This past year, Chantel worked as a Speech and Language Pathology Assistant (SLPA) in the San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools. In this position she worked with preschool students, those diagnosed with autism, Down syndrome, and cerebral palsy and honed her skills in Assistive Technology.

Crystal Villaruz just finished her first year in the Communication Sciences and Disorders Master’s Program at Chapman University. She previously earned a BA in Communicative Disorders from CSU, Fullerton (2011) and is a licensed Speech Language Pathologist Assistant (SPLA). In her application she stated, “I aspire to contribute to the California public schools as an SLP with a specialty in ACC (Augmentative and Alternate Communication) to enrich the learning of children with exceptional needs.” Crystal has worked with children with autism, Down syndrome, and cerebral palsy and honed her skills in Assistive Technology.

Allison Miner received her BS in Communication Science and Disorders from Biola University in May and is entering the Speech Pathology graduate program this fall. As an undergrad, Allison interned at a local elementary school, the university’s Speech and Language Clinic, and provided screening, curriculum materials and feeding therapy for children in Belize. After receiving her degree, she hopes to work with school-aged children and specifically those in need of alternate and augmentative communication devices and aural rehabilitation. In her application Allison stated, “My passion is to advocate for those individuals who do not yet have a voice or whose voice is hindered.”

The 2018 Scholarship Committee included: Ed Foglia, Harris Kight–Moore, Shelley Krantz and Marc Sternberger.

Donations are always gratefully accepted anytime of the year! Please make checks out to the CTA Foundation for Teaching and Learning with the following notation: Russo Memorial Scholarship Fund in the memo line of your check.

Checks should be mailed to KC Walsh, 100 N. Rodeo Gulch Rd., SPC 183, Soquel, CA 95073

CTA/NEA-Retired joined active CTA leaders on the CTA Presidents Legislative Advocacy Day to lobby for increased funding for public education, special education and the protection of Prop. 98 (education funding guarantee). Chico-Retired President Jim Burfeind, Marc Sternberger, and Bonnie Shatun met with legislators at the State Capitol in Sacramento.

At the June State Council, Retired members phonebanked in support of Gavin Newsom for Governor and Tony Thurmond for Superintendent of Public Instruction. Pictured from top left are Orval Garrison, Pixie Hayward Schickele, Bonnie Shatun, and Marc Sternberger; from bottom left are KC Walsh, Harris Kight–Moore, and Debra Sheehan.

Members and guests of Bay Valley-Retired enjoyed a wonderful field trip to see "King Tut: Treasures of the Golden Pharaoh" at the California Science Center in Los Angeles - the largest King Tut exhibition which has ever toured with over 150 authentic artifacts. It’s celebrating the 100 year anniversary of the discovery of King Tut’s tomb.
We all lost an outspoken champion for educators, unions, and public education in June. Education and the union activism were the core of Arlene Pavey’s passion, drive, and life’s work.

After teaching in New York City and Hawaii, she moved to California, where she began her 36-year teaching career with the Garden Grove School District. In her first year there, she became an active member of the Garden Grove Education Association (GGEA). Later she served in the roles of Bargaining Chair, Vice President, and President. While GGEA’s President, she was instrumental in shepherding in collective bargaining. Arlene also was an integral and proud member of CTA, serving on both the CTA Board of Directors, as well as CTA State Council for many years.

Arlene was proud of being such a tenacious, involved public servant for many years. Never at a loss for words, she loved to be up in front of a crowd, on the big screen, while seriously making a positive difference in colleagues’ and students’ lives. She was a delegate to the NEA Representative Assembly for 45 years. At this national level she helped form the National Council for Urban Education Associations (NCUEA) and served this influential organization as its Vice President then President.

As if this was not enough to fill her retirement years, she continued to use her invaluable leadership skills by serving as Secretary, Treasurer, and President of CTA/NEA-Retired. With her guidance, she helped to grow membership, establish our issues conference, and codify our state and local chapters’ bylaws.

In her personal life, Arlene was colorful, had a quick wit, and loved to engage fully in politics and banter. She lived life in a rare way and on her terms. Her drive and fighting spirit has always been a true inspiration to many in public education. She will truly be missed.

ARLENE PAVEY
MAY 28, 1934 – JUNE 1, 2018