



VRTA Newsletter

Publication of Virginia Retired Teachers Association

Member, NRTA—Division of The AARP

Spring 2014 Edition



Meaning in Our Lives

In a book I was recently reading, Philip Yancy, one of my favorite authors, reminded his readers that “A society shows its true strength by how it treats its most vulnerable...The very process of responding to the needy can give new meaning to life.” It occurred to me that retired teachers have derived meaning in their lives by this response during their entire careers. We did our best to give whatever we could to little ones who needed the nurture of a loving teacher every day, to older children who flourished with the encouragement of a bus driver every morning, and to an almost adult high school student who needed the non-judgmental ear of a guidance counselor.

Now in our retirement, VRTA members still derive meaning in their lives by carrying out our motto “To serve, not to be served.” Satisfaction comes with the volunteer hours retired teachers devote to community activities that feed and care for those in need. Many who will never benefit from the legislation have worked tirelessly for the passage of bills to grant the health insurance credit to colleagues who are denied this benefit and to provide an enhanced retirement benefit so that the very elderly might live out their last days with a degree of dignity.

The inspiration and information necessary for us to be effective come from various sources, but many of us rely on the two meetings each year at Blackstone. Informative workshops and inspirational speakers prepare us to meet the challenges in our communities. On Monday, April 28, the assembly will meet after lunch in the auditorium at The Blackstone Conference and Retreat Center to hear a presentation by the VRS staff. In the afternoon, workshops on a variety of topics will equip us to meet the needs of our members and communities with confidence and enthusiasm. I hope that every unit will have at least one member at the Legislative Workshop where we will discuss the actions of the 2014 General Assembly. We are pleased that Delegate Delores McQuinn, patron of HB 110, will join us and will add the perspective of a legislator.

Bea Morris, VRTA Legislative Chair, 540-867-5109

Inside this issue:

<i>VRTA Vice President</i>	2
<i>Tell a Story</i>	3
<i>News from Around the Commonwealth</i>	5-11
<i>VRTA Fall Conference Information</i>	12-14
<i>VRTA Fall Conference Registration Form</i>	15
<i>Information from the VRTA Treasurer</i>	16

Bringing our dream to reality centers around our motto “To serve, not be served”. Your efforts have had a positive and important result at the local, state, and national levels of government. Our purpose has been to maintain and improve the benefits for retired educators and new entrants in the teaching profession...

Volunteers

Author Unknown

- V**aluable is the work you do.
- O**utstanding is how you always come through.
- L**oyal, sincere, and full of good cheer.
- U**ntiring in your efforts throughout the year.
- N**otable are the contributions you make.
- T**rustworthy is every project you take.
- E**ager to reach your every goal.
- E**ffective is the way you fulfill your role.
- R**eady with a smile like a shining star.
- S**pecial and wonderful--that's what you are!!!

In keeping with VRTA's motto: "To serve, not to be served", I offer this poem!!

Rosa Davis Overby,
VRTA Historian



**Attention Districts and
Local Units!!!
Don't forget to bring your
banners and scrapbooks for
display in Blackstone!**

VRTA Vice President



During the VRTA Fall Meeting in Blackstone, Nina McClanahan was elected to complete the term of vice president through June 2014. Nina grew up on a farm near Rose Hill in Lee County, Virginia. She graduated from Thomas Walker High School and holds a BA degree in Elementary Education from Clinch Valley College of the University of Virginia (University of Virginia at Wise). Also, she has completed post graduate work in Computer Technology.

During her senior year at Clinch Valley College Nina married Roger C. McClanahan, who was in the United States Air Force. While Roger served in Vietnam, she began her teaching career in Walterboro, South Carolina. The following two years were spent in Ocean Springs, Mississippi. Once Roger's tour of duty was completed they moved to Grundy, Virginia, which is in Buchanan County. There, she taught at Vansant Elementary School and after school consolidation she was at Riverview Elementary Middle School. She retired after 33 years in the classroom.

Since retiring from the Buchanan County School System, Nina has helped with Science Fairs, SOL remediation and has served as a long term substitute teacher. She is currently treasurer of the Buchanan County Retired Teachers' Association and a member of the DAR. She enjoys local history and reading books written by local residents. Also, she is involved with genealogy research, YMCA activities, scrapbooking, and community projects. She also enjoys time spent with family and friends. Nina and Roger have one son, Russell.

VRTA President's Goals and Objectives 2014

1. **Membership Enhancement** – 60,000 plus Virginia retired Teachers – 7000 plus VRTA members— Continue to increase the numbers of VRTA members.
2. **Legislative** – Keep members informed about legislative concerns/interests.
3. **Maintain Professional Relations and Contacts** – Work with other groups to promote VRTA/NRTA Interests.
4. **Volunteerism** – Encourage members to be active in youth and community activities.
Teachers/educators are a very talented group.
5. **NRTA** – Encourage membership for a national voice in legislative issues.

Jim Bradford, President

Virginia Retired Teachers Association

Virginia Retired Teachers Association

“Organized November 28, 1936”

2012-2014 Officers

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Your Voice Makes a Difference



Serving as the President of the Virginia Retired Teachers Association has permitted me an opportunity to develop a broad view of the legislative needs of educators at the local, state, and national levels of our government. Our members need factual information to guide the association in a meaningful way to address and accomplish our goals and objectives.

Bringing our dream to reality centers around our motto "To serve, not be served". Your efforts have had a positive and important result at the local, state, and national levels of government. Our purpose has been to maintain and improve the benefits for retired educators and new entrants in the teaching profession...

It would be impossible to imagine our past, present, and future without the local, district, the VRTA, and NRTA. The VRTA holds state level conferences twice each year. The purpose of these conferences is to implement our membership's goals and objectives in a realistic manner. Accordingly, political change at the local, state, and national levels is certain. Our member's need leadership that provides encouragement, training, and factual information to combat the constant challenges that will affect each member. The members must recognize that your retirement benefits are under tremendous political siege. Our legislative objectives are about the educational issues at the local, state, and national levels of government. Each issue should be addressed with facts, persistence, and patience. With your help our association can make a meaningful difference. We need to continue to reach our goal of informing each retired educator.

My prayer is that the "Great Architect" will assist us in achieving our purpose of inspiring and guiding our members. May the "Great Architect" look favorably on our motto "To Serve, Not Be Served" in all our present and future endeavors.

Jim Bradford,
VRTA President

Tell a Story--Don't Grind an Axe



I love "Letters to the Editor." I have written dozens of Letters to the Editor, and all of them have been published, and some have been awarded. I once wrote a Letter to the Editor ABOUT "Letters to the Editor." That letter appeared in the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* in 2010. I like it so much, I am copying it here, for you:

"Dear Editor:

I enjoyed the editorial "Stop It" about letters and plagiarism. I love the Letters to the Editor section, and I appreciate your efforts to maintain its integrity and purity as expressions of individual thought.

Letters to the editor give us insight into what folks in a community are talking about. There's one delightful small-town paper that I read regularly that has letters complaining about wet clothes left in the Laundromat. I am equally charmed by letters to *The Washington Post*, which catch obscure grammatical errors in news reports.

When I read the letters, I want to know what Urchie thinks or what Homer thinks. I am not very interested in what Mrs. Smith's third grade class thinks, and even less interested in what the spokesman for a major association thinks (I don't even read those). I was shocked one day when I worked as a temp, and my boss told me to write a letter to the editor, to be printed over his signature. (I didn't do it.) I am almost as dismayed when I get e-mails urging me to join in a letter-writing campaign. They usually supply a "sample letter."

Plagiarism, of course, defeats the purpose of the tradition of Letters to the Editor. Thank you for "keeping it real."

Bonnie Atwood,
Richmond

Most Active Member

The 2013 VRTA Most Active Member Award was presented to Margurette Angell at Blackstone during the Fall VRTA Meeting. She is a District P and Roanoke County Retired Teacher Association member. Maggie is active in nearly every aspect of her community. She has served in many leadership positions in her district and local teacher's association and *Theta Chapter of Delta Kappa Gamma*, an International Honor Society for Women Educators. Additionally, she has served on numerous committees, conducted workshops and attended conferences for these organizations. She is committed to charity and church organizations, and shows her commitment by volunteering to organize, implement, and do whatever may be needed for Belmont Baptist Church, Vinton area elementary, middle, and high school PTA's, Westchester Garden Club, and Vinton's Women's Club. Maggie volunteers with Meals on Wheels, the Roanoke Rescue Mission, Botetourt Food Pantry, and the Botetourt Free Clinic. With a grandson who suffers from Type I juvenile diabetes, Maggie is most committed to the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation and actively organized and participated as team captain for Matthew's Marchers every year since 2006. Maggie has a passion for making her community a better place and is most deserving of the 2013 VRTA Most Active Member honor.



Maggie Angell receives the Most Valuable Member Award from Leigh McKay.

With a grandson who suffers from Type I juvenile diabetes, Maggie is most committed to the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation and actively organized and participated as team captain for Matthew's Marchers every year since 2006. Maggie has a passion for making her community a better place and is most deserving of the 2013 VRTA Most Active Member honor.

ive Member honor.

Remember! Send nominations for Most Active Member to Leigh McKay by August 1, 2014, to be presented at the 2014 Fall VRTA Meeting. The criteria for the nomination are available on the VRTA website. Nominations are more complete if the persons being nominated are informed and have input



Retired Teachers Day in Virginia

In 1996 the General Assembly passed a resolution declaring January 31 Retired Teachers Day in Virginia. The observance of this day was held on Thursday, January 30, since Friday is not a good day to meet legislators. The weather prevented a number of people from attending, but 14 VRTA members from Manassas, Buena Vista, Fincastle, Henrico, Richmond, Harrisonburg, and Staunton gathered at the General Assembly Building where Del. Ken Plum and the legislative aides of Sen. Janet Howell and Del. Delores McQuinn met with the group. Appreciation Goody Bags were given to 13 legislators who have been friends of public education. Several met with their delegates and senators. Senator Charles Colgan introduced VRTA members in the noon session of the Senate and Delegate Delores McQuinn made the introductions in the House.

Retired Teachers Day in Virginia is tentatively planned for Thursday, January 29, 2015. Please mark your calendars now and join us for an interesting day at the GA next year.



Susan Powell, Weldon Martin, Jim Bradford, Bea Morris, and Marcia Elliot attended Retired Teachers Day in Richmond.

VRTA Newsletter is published twice annually, in the spring and fall. Submit articles to Editor Susan Martin at 1049 Martins Lane, Fincastle, VA 24090 or email at wlmartin@ntelos.net Deadline for the Fall 2014 newsletter is August 12, 2014.

News From Around the Commonwealth

Buchanan County Retired Teachers

Participate in AARP Food Drive

On September 9, 2013, the Buchanan County Retired Teachers' Association met at Poplar Gap Park for a picnic and to participate in the AARP 2013 State-wide Community Food Drive. The group donated approximately 450 pounds of food to "Feed my Sheep," a newly organized food pantry that serves Buchanan County.

Retired teachers and guests present were Sheldon Woods, Glinda Sollien, Betty Looney, Patricia Dales, Ruby Looney, Mary Salyer, Sandy Cole, Sharon Lester, Patricia Hogston, Iris Hayes, Penny Jennell, Judy Holland, Scottie Sollien, Joan Boyd, Nina McClanahan, Janie Mullins, and Doris Stiltner. Those present that are not in the picture are Gertrude Stacy, Bill Boyd, Dickie Stiltner, and Roger McClanahan.



District G News

District G Legislative Chairperson Bea Morris, who is also state legislative chairperson, updated the group on legislative issues for retired educators. The group will be meeting on Wednesday, May 7, at Traditions with a program presented by Kelly Masters, Associate Professor of Pharmacy at Shenandoah University, followed by lunch at Traditions Restaurant. Contact Karen Whetzel, President, at [540-740-8589](tel:540-740-8589) or kswhetzel@gmail.com for more information.



Retired educators (teachers, administrators, and support personnel) from Augusta County, Bath/Highland County, Page County, and Shenandoah County Retired Educators' groups gathered at Traditions Restaurant in Harrisonburg for a business meeting, talk by retired Rockingham County Commissioner of Accounts David Hatmaker, and lunch in October.



Officers of District G are Karen Whetzel, President; Randy Bailey, Vice President; Richard Thompson, Secretary; and Betty Carey, Treasurer.

VRTA 2013 Fall Meeting



Augusta RTA was represented at the VRTA Fall Meeting by Bea Morris (also VRTA Legislative Chairperson), Marcia Elliott; Shirley Crawford, President Elect; and Linda Puffenbarger, President.



Karen Whetzel, President, and Elizabeth Sollenberger represented Shenandoah County RTA at the VRTA Fall Conference. Karen is also president of District G.



Elizabeth Sollenberger played the organ for the memorial service on Tuesday at the VRTA Fall Conference, and also played the piano for the national anthem.

News From Around the Commonwealth

District T is Very Active

District T is a growing organization comprised of three units, Chesapeake, Portsmouth and Suffolk. We are giving our third yearly scholarship this June to a graduating senior from Suffolk majoring in the field of education. Our scholarship of \$500.00 is funded through our dues, fundraisers and donations from our group. The scholarship is the brain child of Iness Taylor, our co-president. In addition to the scholarship, District T is pleased to report that we also participate in the AARP Food Drive, give school supplies to a chosen unit each year and collect useful articles like hats, gloves, etc. for the homeless shelters in each unit. We are proud to have contributed \$100.00 to a restoration project sponsored by the Portsmouth Unit and the Suffolk unit honored their own with several members receiving certificates of appreciation for continued work in their unit. The Chesapeake Unit supports District T through participation in sponsoring programs on the health and welfare of the District. Our District T Banner has been present at the conventions for several years and we are very thankful for all the support VRTA gives us each year.



FCRTA President Janie Blanchard, (left) Floyd Elementary teacher Beth Willoughby (center) and FCRTA Vice President Alice Slusher (right) as they present FES mini-grant for an adapted book library.



FCRTA President Janie Blanchard (left), Willis Elementary teacher Marsha Vass (center) and FCRTA Vice President Alice Slusher (right) as they present WES mini-grant for a "US History Tea Party" project.

Floyd Retired Teachers Staying Busy

Floyd County Retired Teachers, District M, recently awarded funding for two recipients of their mini-grant program. The program, in its second year with awards of \$100 or more, was created to support teachers and students. The winning proposal at Floyd Elementary School, coordinated by speech pathologist Beth Willoughby, focuses on adapting books for children with special needs. The mini-grant provides funds for purchasing books for which adaptations will be made that will encourage students with physical, developmental or cognitive delays to access literature. Winning project coordinator, Marsha Vass, at Willis Elementary plans to use the grant for a "U.S. History Tea Party" to enhance the understanding of history and engage learners in using their creative oral language skills. Students will dress in period attire and role play the speeches of historical characters. The culminating activity will be a tea party set up in authentic fashion with students dressing in character and presenting final presentations of selected characters.

Floyd retired teachers have had some interesting outings/meetings. A highlight of one meeting was traveling to a local renovated one-room schoolhouse where member Catherine Vest began her teaching career. Mrs. Vest shared memories and details of her early challenges as a beginning teacher. Another memorable trip found the members touring the Center in the Square in Roanoke, VA. Members visited the Butterfly Garden, the Rooftop Garden, and the History Museum. One venture shared by the group was a Sunshine bus tour to Biltmore Estate and Gardens in Asheville, NC, where one member served at the bus tour guide. In October the Floyd unit hosted the District M meeting with local photographer and author, Fred First, making a presentation.

Several members log many hours volunteering for the schools and for numerous community organizations. The group is now focusing on a project to celebrate their 40th anniversary this year. The FCRTA hopes to continue and expand their services to the schools and community. The Association also funds a scholarship each year for a graduating FCHS student who plans to become a teacher.

News From Around the Commonwealth

PCRTA — We Did It!

It takes just a little to give much, and no matter where you live, you can help fight hunger in your community. The Patrick County Retired Teachers Association in partnership with volunteers from Patrick County Food Bank did just that by participating in the Virginia Statewide Community Food Drive sponsored by NRTA, AARP's Educator Community. On Friday and Saturday, September 6-7, 2013, volunteers from those organizations collected 1793 pounds of food and over \$1000 for the AARP Statewide Food Drive. Both the food and money will stay in Patrick County.

Patrick County Retired Teachers Association and Locust Grove Chapter of AARP were the winners of the state Food Drive and received the Challenge Award for Most Pounds collected.

Patrick County Retired Teachers also received letters of congratulations from Robert Blancato, President of Virginia AARP and from Amber Nightingale, AARP Association State, as well as a certificate of appreciation presented to the unit "in recognition to your unit for your outstanding and generous contribution to the 2013 AARP Statewide Food Drive." In his letter of appreciation to Patrick County, Blancato thanked the retired teachers for their time, support, and dedication to the worthwhile causes in which they are involved in their community and state. He commented that they were living the motto of the founder of AARP, Dr. Ethel Percy Andrus: "To serve, not to be served."



Food Drive Volunteers — Carol Vernon, Ella Sue Joyce, Phyllis Eastridge, Betty Runge, Penny Runge, and Lena Mae Martin

Proposed Bylaw Changes

Visit the VRTA website at www.vrta.org to find the proposed bylaw changes to be discussed at the VRTA Delegate Assembly in April. These changes will be on the website at the end of March.

RCRT Holds Fall Meetings

The Roanoke City Retired Teachers' Association met at Covenant Presbyterian Church on September 12, 2013. Our guest speaker was lawyer, John P. Fishwick, Jr., who spoke about "Legal Issues Confronting Teachers." He encouraged teachers to stay involved with the School Board, with politics, and to continue mentoring our young people.

On October 10, 2013, we had a wonderful trip to Michie Tavern in Charlottesville, Virginia. In spite of rain, we enjoyed a buffet lunch, a tour of the tavern, and an opportunity to shop in the gift shops.

At our December meeting, we had a luncheon at the Tanglewood Holiday Inn, and were entertained by the very talented "Hands For God Puppet Ministry." Many cans of soup were brought by our members to the meeting to contribute to the AARP program "Soup For Seniors." Also at our September and December meetings, silent auctions were held. All proceeds from the auctions are given to our Scholarship Fund for future teachers.



Trip to Michie Tavern

Prince William

The Prince William Retired Teachers Association hosted a reception on September 23, 2013, to honor the new retired educators in the area. There were 14 who attended and 13 of them joined the association. We also collected school supplies that were distributed to several local schools.



News From Around the Commonwealth

Greenville RTA Installs New Officers

The Greenville Retired Teachers Association (GRTA) underwent new changes with the installation of new officers: President—Glenn C. Pair, Sr.; Vice President—Rev. McKinley R. Tucker, Sr.; Secretary—Calvin Hawkins; Corresponding Secretary—Sarah Seaborne; Treasurer—Carolyn High; Financial Secretary—Victoria Clark; and Chaplin—Genelle Smith.

Collaborating with AARP, Piggly Wiggly, the Samaritan Helping Hands Kitchen, and the Greenville community, GRTA combated hunger in the county, by filling 62 bags of groceries for its citizens in need.

In December the unit recognized its homebound members with cards, visits, and calls. The unit also celebrated the holidays with a spirited and delectable luncheon.

At the District D meeting hosted by Petersburg/Prince George RTA, under the leadership of Rev. G.W. Pugh, (who is now retiring) the unit won six awards. The most notable were for scholarship and equalized membership. The unit was also recognized for participation in the AARP food drive.

Sadly, at the end of the month, GRTA lost another "torchbearer," Mrs. Caudill Johns, who had been a dedicated member for two decades.

Lastly, the unit congratulated its former president Rev. George W. Pugh, Sr. for receiving an award from the Emporia City Council on his nine years of service to the community as a member of District 19 Community Service Board. This board strives to improve the quality and productivity of the lives of individuals who experience or are at risk of mental disability or substance abuse.



From left to right (standing): Genelle Smith, Sarah Seaborne; Carolyn High, Victoria Clark,
Seated: Calvin Hawkins, Glenn C. Pair, Sr.,
Rev. McKinley R. Tucker, Sr.

Petersburg/Prince George Retired Teachers Host District D Meeting

The Petersburg/Prince George Retired Teachers Unit was the host to one hundred four members of District D, Virginia Retired Teachers Association held at Zion Baptist Church on December 9, 2013. The meeting was held in the Della Bannister Fellowship Hall which was decorated beautifully with Christmas material. Of special interest were the multi-colored poinsettias that served as table center pieces and later as door prizes. The various Petersburg and Prince George businesses, institutions, agencies and individuals were extremely kind in providing us with items to fill "goody-bags" and many, many door prizes for all members present. The committee responsible for the preparation for the event was led by William Cosby and committee members were June Hill, Mavis Farrar, Jacquelyn Hopkins, Marolyn Quarles, Annette Nixon, Gretchen Parker, Mary McCray, Susie Brown and Pauline Gore. The meeting was opened by George Henderson, president of the P/PG RTA Unit, and a welcome was given by William Cosby. Prayer was led by Canzata Turner and the group recited the Pledge to the flag. At this time, Christmas dinner was served.

The entertainment for the program was provided by the Petersburg/Prince George Unit Chorale, directed by Gretchen Parker, a prelude of Christmas music was played by Shirley Townsend. The members were Ida Allen, June Hill, Vivian Brown, Pauline Gore, Cynthia Mitchell, David Townsend, Shirley Townsend, Linda Smith, Lula Divers, Canzata Turner, Jeanette Watts, and Susie Brown. They sang a medley of Christmas songs and later led the audience in a sing-along. It was wonderful!

The second part of the meeting was conducted by Maudie Scott, president of District D. The Attendance Award was won by the Amelia Unit. Door prizes were given out by the P/PGRT Committee.



Petersburg/Prince George Unit Chorale

News From Around the Commonwealth

SRTA is on the Move

The Suffolk Retired Teachers Association has been very busy in the past few months:

SRTA presented a Star Recognition and Awards Ceremony on Sunday, October 27, 2013. It was held at the Tabernacle Christian Church, Shepherd Center in Suffolk. Those honored included Vermelle T. Byrd, Joyce Diggs, Juanita Glover, Vivian P. Pruden, Bertha S. Taylor, Iness E. Taylor, Bertha B. Turner and Marion Wright. The history of the association was given by Julia Liggins and Dr. Deran Whitney, Superintendent of the Suffolk Public Schools gave greetings. A poem "Why I Teach" was read by Bertha B. Turner. Presentations were given by the president, Costellar Ledbetter. A memorial service was also given for the following: Unity Bailey, Alphonso Downing, Vickie Kendale, Millie Monroe, Sylvester Jones, John E. Jones, Rosella Saunders, Jackie Walker and Sylvallius Walston. Their spirit and influence will abide with us for many years. "You never lose what you love if you love what you lose."

The \$1,000 scholarship this year was awarded to Mildreka Purdie. She is attending Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, VA.

The unit held a purse-a-thon. Purses collected from members were given to the Battered Women Shelter. Each purse included toiletries.

School supplies collected from members were donated to Booker T. Washington Elementary School.

One hundred gift bags were donated to Tabernacle Village, an Assisted Living Center on East Washington St. in Suffolk.

Perishable goods were donated to the Salvation Army. Other contributions include donations to the American Cancer Society during the Relay for Life event.

Officers of the unit are Costellar Ledbetter, President; Iness E. Taylor, Vice President; Vivian P. Pruden, Secretary; Bertha Turner, Corresponding Secretary; Mary Copeland, Chaplain; Marion Wright, Treasurer; Madeline Stokes, Legislative Chairperson; and Mary Hicks and Priscilla Benn, Community Service Chairpersons.

WJCC RETIRED TEACHER'S ASSOCIATION DONATES TO "FISH"



Pictured with a member of the Board of Directors for FISH are Christine

Jordan-secretary;

Vivian Short, Jackie

Gardner-President; Myrtle Engs, and Dot Webb, Treasurer. This group shares "Fun" activities together, volunteer their assistance and support many community outreach projects.

Winchester Retired Teachers

The Winchester Retired Teachers are supporting the William and Henry Evans Home for Children. The Evans Home under the direction of Executive Director Marc Jaccard, is a home for children between the ages of five and seventeen who cannot live with his or her family of origin, yet will not thrive in foster or adoptive care. Mr. Jaccard was a guest of the WRT at their September meeting. He shared with the membership that in addition to the children not best suited for traditional family life the home has expanded in recent years to include homeless children as well. There is a misconception that these children have done something wrong. They are actually there through no fault of their own. Their being at the Evans Home enables their guardians to work without worrying about the care of their children until they can provide a home for them. The home offers a home-like environment with personalized rooms for the residents. In addition, they have established an alumni house for former residents who run into unexpected difficulties. The home offers access to available resources needed to get back on their feet. It supports about 25 of these former residents a year. The home is a local nonprofit, and they do not spend a lot of their funds to raise money. The WRT is pleased to be a supporter of this home during this year.

The WRT also hosted the District N fall meeting. The meeting was held October 15, 2013, at the Holiday Inn Gateway in Winchester, VA. The entertainment for the meeting was a program presented by Judy Sue Huyett-Kempf, Executive Director of the Patsy Cline House in Winchester. Patsy Cline is a hometown legend. Her story is one known throughout the music world. The program included a musical program of Patsy's music sung by Liz Ruffner.

Liz Ruffner
Entertains WRT



News From Around the Commonwealth

News from District D

District D of the Virginia Retired Teachers Association is comprised of 12 units which represent 13 counties and four cities in central Virginia, making it the largest district in the state. Mrs. Maudie Scott of the Amelia unit is in her second year serving as president of District D.

District D continued its tradition of excellence as units performed outstanding community service activities and also developed and implemented creative unity projects.

These are the highlights of individual unit activities and achievements for 2013.

The Amelia Unit was named the Most Active Unit in the VRTA. They also hosted a Back to School Jamboree where they distributed school supplies.

The Brunswick unit read to students in observance of National Education Week and gave gifts and sang Christmas carols to a local nursing home in December.

The Buckingham/Cumberland/Prince Edward unit treated 25 K-12 students to a pizza party in December. There were games and prizes for the students.

The Colonial Heights unit honored two scholarship recipients at the annual end of the year banquet where the food was prepared by students in the Culinary Arts Department of the Colonial Heights High School Technical Center.

The Dinwiddie unit collected and donated 1,000 pounds of food and was recognized by AARP. Scholarships of \$1,000 were awarded.

The Franklin/Southampton unit held its first scholarship banquet and honored its president, Mrs. Daphne Miller. Reflections were given by her daughter, Miss Crystal Miller. A musical tribute was presented by Mr. Charles Haskins.

The Greenville unit was recognized for providing more than 2,000 hours of community service and participated in the AARP food drive for the fourth consecutive year.

The Hopewell unit established a Beginning Teacher Fund to help teachers purchase supplies for their classroom. They also awarded \$1,000 in scholarships.

The Lunenburg/Nottoway unit hosted the March District D Meeting which featured the Blackstone Primary School "Readers Theater."

The Mecklenburg unit hosted the September District D meeting which featured the Clarksville Elementary School Competition Team. They participated in the District's unity project by holding a children's book drive.

The Petersburg/Prince George unit hosted the December District D meeting which featured the P/PG Choral Ensemble. District D received 51 VRTA awards in October, the most in the state.

The Sussex unit was recognized for outstanding participation in community service and WOY activities, including tutoring students in GED classes, volunteering at Head Start, and organizing a book drive for first and second grade students. They also awarded \$1,000 in scholarships.

News From Around the Commonwealth

Brunswick Retired Teachers Association

The guest for the fall meeting of the Brunswick Retired Teachers Association was Officer Derrick Mays from the Brunswick Sherriff Department. Officer Mays spoke about scams in the county that seniors should be aware of. Following his presentation, there was a question and answer period.



Members present were (left to right) Edna Packer, Eula Washington, William Washington, Louise Mont-Tucker, President, Emma Staples, Officer Mays, Virginia Thomson, and Robert Gordon.

Dinwiddie RTA Participates in AARP Food Drive

The Dinwiddie Retired Teachers Association partnered with Dinwiddie High School to participate in the AARP Community Food Drive. One thousand seventy pounds of food were collected and delivered to the Dinwiddie Food Bank. Members of the high school football team packed the truck. Contributions increased by 318 pounds this year.



Shenandoah County

Shenandoah County Officers for 2013-14 after preparation for the annual First Day of School Breakfast, at which food was collected for Luke's Backpack. Left to right-seated: Virginia Stultz, Secretary; Gloria Ryman, Treasurer; Connie Fauber, Vice President; and Karen Whetzel, President
In front, Bill Moyers, Past President

Frederick County Retired Teachers Association

The Frederick County Retired Teachers Association met for their final meeting of 2012-2013 year at the Travelodge in Winchester, Virginia, on May 14, 2013, to celebrate another successful year. The unit raised over \$4,400.00 for the scholarship fund which supports a senior from each of the three county high schools with a one thousand dollar scholarship, donated more than one hundred pounds on nonperishable foods to a local food pantry and donated over three hundred dollars in monetary gifts and over four hundred dollars of instructional supplies to the Winchester Day Preschool which provides pre-school training to the low income students in the area. Members of the association are active throughout the community through many volunteer organizations. The unit looks forward to expanding its community outreach during the coming year.



Ed Scott and Peggy Clark, Board Member of the Winchester Day Preschool with donations made during the May meeting.



Scholarship Committee Chairman, Shirley Place, with two of the three scholarship recipients during the May meet-

VRTA Delegate Assembly to Meet in April

The VRTA Delegate Assembly will meet on April 28-29 at the Blackstone Conference and Retreat Center. The Board of Directors will meet on Monday morning followed by a presentation from the Virginia Retirement System staff that afternoon. Also on Monday afternoon there will be a variety of break-out sessions that you may attend. Sessions will include: Senior Health, Getting More Volunteers, Home Modification, Community Service, VRTA Member Benefits and many others.

On Monday evening entertainment will be provided by Ernest Holley followed by fellowship and a chance to win prizes playing bingo.

The business session will take place on Tuesday morning. Sharon Smith from NRTA will deliver the keynote address.

Plan to attend the VRTA Delegate Assembly in April. You will have a to chance to visit with old friends and make new ones, as well.

Community Service

At the 2014 VRTA Delegate Assembly, President-elect Phyllis Eastridge will present a session on Community Service giving tips on With Our Youth and Community Service reporting. Also, she will include tips for Presidents, Presidents-elect, and Secretaries as well as information on choosing prescription drug coverage for those on Medicare.

REMINDER!

The VRTA Community Service Committee reminds everyone that it is again time to start collecting volunteer hours and writing reports. Deadline for hours and service to state is May 15, 2014. Send this information to: Phyllis Eastridge 2789 Wayside Road, Stuart, VA 24171 (276) 694-6766

pneastredge@embarqmail.com

or to:

Louise Mont-Tucker P.O. Box 430, Broadnax, VA 23920
(434) 729-1006 loumonttuc@hotmail.com



Report from Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee consists of Mary Lou Trimble, Chairman, Iness Taylor, and Patricia Hogston. The Committee's report was presented and approved by the VRTA Executive Committee and the VRTA Board of Directors for presentation to the VRTA General Session on Tuesday, October 13, 2013. Mary Lou Trimble, Chairman, presented the following slate of VRTA Officers for 2014-2016 (2 year terms) that are to be voted on at the VRTA Spring Delegate Assembly on April 29, 2014. The nominees are President elect, Calvin Porter; Vice- President, Nina McClanahan; Secretary, Daphne Miller; and Treasurer, Weldon Martin. The floor will be open for additional nominations in accordance will Robert's Rules of Order. Note: Calvin Porter withdrew his name for President on February 15, 2014.

Bylaws and Structure

I will be holding a session on Monday afternoon at the 2014 Delegate Assembly. It will concern proposed changes to VRTA bylaws. Whenever our bylaws change there are corresponding changes to our structure. Those who attend the session can exchange ideas, ask questions and give input on proposed changes. In addition, I will be helping local units and districts with needed modifications to their current bylaws. Those who wish to participate should bring several copies of their bylaws. You may also look on the VRTA website, vrta.org for a complete copy of current VRTA bylaws. Looking forward to seeing you in Blackstone!

Helen Tippie

htippie70@gmail.com (Please note this change in my email address.)

Who is a Delegate?

Voting members of the Delegate Assembly shall be members of the Executive Committee, district presidents, unit presidents, and two delegates from each local unit. If a unit has over 100 members, it shall have an additional delegate for each 50 members or fraction thereof. Before you register for the VRTA Delegate Assembly, determine if you are a delegate from your unit.

Monday Night Entertainment



What's your favorite kind of music – patriotic, hymns, oldies, pop/rock, spirituals? Regardless, you will be in for a treat when Ernest Holley, a VRTA member from Staunton, entertains with a variety of styles at Blackstone on Monday night, April 28.

Ernie, as he is fondly known by his colleagues, was born in Washington, North Carolina. After attending public schools there, he received a BS in Science from Elizabeth City State University and a Masters in Education from the University of Virginia. For 12 years he taught biology, chemistry, and physics in the Staunton public schools and then for 22 years served there as guidance counselor at Robert E. Lee High School.

Ernie has been and still is actively involved in many civic and educational organizations. He has served as president of the Staunton Education Association as has been on the Board of Directors of the Virginia and National Education Associations. He is past-president of the VEA-Retired Educators and is a member of the National Education Association Minority Leadership Cadre. Currently, he is a supervisor for Old Dominion University student teachers. Since retirement, he has been a member of the Augusta Retired Educators Association, VRTA, and AARP/NRTA.

Sharon Smith to Deliver

Keynote Address



On Tuesday morning, April 29, Sharon Smith will be presenting the keynote address at the VRTA Delegate Assembly. Sharon is a Senior Program Analyst with NRTA, serving as the liaison for 22 states and works with retired educator association leaders and AARP state offices, with a focus on relationship-building and collaboration. Sharon was a founding staff member of NRTA's With Our Youth Program. She brings hands-on classroom experience from her years teaching first grade in the public school systems of Ohio and Florida. She conducts workshops on tools for identifying and working with potential leaders. We look forward to hearing from her in April.

Ernie is widely known for his musical talent and has performed in many venues. In addition to being in much demand at home, he has sung the National Anthem for the Washington Redskins and the Washington Wizards. As a member of Trinity Episcopal Church Choir, he toured England in 1999 and 2002 with the Trinity Singers, composed mainly of these choir members. And in 2004, he toured France as a member of the Al Hamilton Gospel Choir. In 2005 and 2008, he was invited back to France as a guest soloist with a French choir.

Ernie is married to the former Phillippa Duke and is the father of two sons, Antoine (deceased) and Lamont.



Blackstone Conference and Retreat Center — 707 Fourth Street Blackstone, VA 23824

Phone — 434-292-5308

Directions to Blackstone Conference and Retreat Center

From the North:

I-95 South to I-85 South at Petersburg
Take I-85 South to Route 460 West to Blackstone
Take first Blackstone exit (Business 460) Main Street
Follow Main Street into town, go through 5 traffic lights
Take right on Fourth Street to BCRC

From the East:

Route 460 West to Blackstone
Take first Blackstone exit (Business 460) Main Street
Follow Main Street into town, go through 5 traffic lights
Take right on Fourth Street to BCRC

From the South:

I-85 to South Hill Exit 15
Route 138 North to Kenbridge
Right turn at traffic light
Route 40 into Blackstone on Main Street
Follow Main Street into town to Fourth Street
Left on Fourth Street to BCRC

From the West:

Route 460 East to Nottoway Exit (Business 460)
Route 460 Business into Blackstone on Church Street
Right at College Avenue to BCRC

Future Conferences



2014 Fall VRTA Meeting — October 6-7, 2014

2015 Spring Delegate Assembly — April 27-28, 2015

2015 Fall VRTA Meeting — October 5-6, 2015

Newsletter Articles

VRTA wants your news for the newsletters. It would be helpful if articles submitted for publishing would be emailed to the newsletter editor. If an article cannot be emailed, typing the article helps to ensure accuracy. Pictures can be emailed or mailed to the editor. The people that are pictured should have given permission for their pictures to be used in the newsletter. This is especially important if pictures of students are included with the article. All submitted articles will be used if space permits. Articles received after the deadline will likely not be included. The deadline for the Fall 2014 newsletter is August 12th.

Susan Martin
Newsletter Editor

VRTA Mailing List

In order to make the VRTA mailing list more accurate, names of people whose newsletters have been returned to VRTA three times in a row will be removed from the list. If you know someone who should be receiving a newsletter and is not getting it, please let the newsletter editor know about this. Please continue to inform the VRTA treasurer about members address changes and deaths of VRTA members. With your help VRTA can cut the cost of the postage for mailing the newsletters.

Attention Unit Presidents

Send the names of your unit's voting delegates to Jim Bradford (drjcb@embarqmail.com) before the Delegate Assembly in Blackstone on April 28th.



Menus for VRTA Conference

Monday, April 28

Breakfast – Scrambled Eggs

Bacon
Diced Hash Browns
Bagel/cream cheese
Cold Cereal

Lunch – Virginia Ham

Tossed Salad
Roasted Sweet Potatoes
Broccoli
Fruit Cup

Dinner – Baked Chicken

Tossed Salad
Baked Potato
Green Beans
Cobbler



Tuesday, April 29

Breakfast – Scrambled Eggs

Sausage Links
Fried Apples
Muffins – Assorted
Cold Cereal

Lunch – Hamburger (with lettuce, tomato, and onion available)

Potato Wedges
Baked Beans
Ice Cream Sandwich

(Menus are subject to change.)

2014 Delegate Assembly Schedule

Sunday 7:00pm — Executive Committee Meeting

Monday 8:am — Breakfast

9:00am — 11:30am — Registration

9:30am — Board of Directors meeting

11:45am — Lunch

12:50pm — Virginia Retirement System Assembly

2:00pm — Workshop Sessions

6:00pm — Dinner

7:15pm — Entertainment

8:30pm — Popcorn and Bingo

Tuesday 8:00am — Breakfast

9:00am — Delegate Assembly and Keynote Speaker

12:00noon — Lunch



Banners on display at
Fall 2013 VRTA
Meeting.

VRTA Delegate Assembly

April 28-29, 2014

Blackstone Conference and Retreat Center

NOTE: Registration fees and lodging rates are per person, not per room or per couple.

Each person attending the conference should fill out a registration form.

Registration postmarked by Friday, April 11, 2014

\$25.00

Amount paid (**Late registration ----35.00**)

		<u>One Night</u>	<u>Two Nights</u>	<u>Total</u>
Lodging: Main Building	(one person/room-\$47.50/night)	_____	_____	_____
	(Multiple persons/room-\$43.75 <u>per person</u> /night)	_____	_____	_____
Goodson Lodge	(one person/room-\$58.00/night)	_____	_____	_____
	(Multiple persons/room-\$53.25 <u>per person</u> /night)	_____	_____	_____

Roommates _____

Total for Registration and Lodging \$ _____

Room assignments will be made based on the registration postmark. Later registrants may have to share a bathroom with an adjoining room.

Meals:	<u>Monday</u>		
	Breakfast – 8:00 AM	\$ 7.50	_____
	Lunch – 11:45 AM	\$12.00	_____
	Dinner – 6:00 PM	\$9.00	_____
	<u>Tuesday</u>		
	Breakfast – 8:00 AM	\$7.50	_____
	Lunch – 12 Noon	\$11.00	_____

Sub Total for Meals \$ _____

Total of enclosed check to VRTA (For total add Registration fee, Lodging and Meals) \$ _____

Mail completed registration form and check, payable to VRTA, **no later than Friday, April 11, 2014**. Send to: Leigh McKay, 3025 McVitty Forest Dr., #209, Roanoke, VA 24018, Phone: 540-989-4417 (home), 540-529-5131 (cell), email- cwmck5@cox.net

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP CODE _____

PHONE _____ E-MAIL _____

EMERGENCY CONTACT – NAME _____ PHONE _____

NAME OF LOCAL UNIT _____ DISTRICT _____

ROOM PREFERENCE _____ (Will be honored, if possible, as forms are received.)

SUNDAY ARRIVAL TIME (if applicable) _____. (**May register any time after 4:30 PM**)

ARE YOU A VOTING DELEGATE? _____

Virginia Retired
Teachers Association
Susan Martin
Newsletter Editor
1049 Martins Lane
Fincastle, VA 24090

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News From the VRTA Treasurer

I am so appreciative of the cooperation that I have received from local and district treasurers during this past year. Please continue to submit your state dues to me at Weldon Martin, VRTA Treasurer, 1049 Martins Lane, Fincastle, VA 24090. These can be submitted at any time during the year that they are collected. It is now time to be collecting dues for the 2014-2015 membership year. I can also be reached by phone at (540) 473-2636 and by email at wlmartin@ntelos.net. (If for some reason I don't get back to you within a few days, please don't hesitate to try again.)

Some other important reminders for treasurers are:

- Continue to submit the names of deceased members to me so that they can be removed from the membership data base.
- Notify me of change of address information for state members so that they can be corrected in our membership data base.
- The deadline for submitting double signed copies of your approved local and district budget for 2014-2015 is December 31, 2014. This is required documentation for our IRS Group Exemption files. In addition, if you have amended or revised your constitution/bylaws, I will need a double signed copy for our VRTA IRS Group Exemption File.
- I will have a supply of dues settlement statements and membership enrollment forms at the spring delegate assembly in Blackstone. I can also mail these to local unit treasurers, upon request. I will be conducting an informational session for local and district treasurers at the conference.
- Local units and districts who are not part of our VRTA IRS Group Exemption and are interested in becoming a member should contact me for further information. The next opportunity to become a part of our umbrella will be March 2015. Don't forget to mark your calendars to file your annual E Post Card report with the IRS no later than November 15, 2015. This must be done annually in order to maintain your status as a member of the VRTA IRS Group Exemption and failure to do so will jeopardize your status as a member of our group. Please contact me if you have additional questions. Although this is a fairly simple process, it is mandatory and must be done electronically.

I look forward to meeting with local unit and district treasurers who will be in attendance at the meeting in Blackstone.