

HIGHLAND COUNTY RETIRED TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Newsletter
10-11-2020



* There is no season when such pleasant and sunny spots may be lighted on, and produce so pleasant an effect on the feelings, as now in October. *Nathaniel Hawthorne*

* October had the tremendous possibility. The summer's oppressive heat was a distant memory, and the golden leaves promised the world full of beautiful adventures. They made me believe in miracles. *Sarah Guillory*

* Bittersweet October. The mellow, messy, leaf-kicking, perfect pause between the opposing miseries of summer and winter. *Carol Bishop Hipps*

* In October, a maple tree before your window lights up your room like a great lamp. Even on cloudy days, its presence helps to dispel the gloom. *John Burroughs*

From the Editor:

As I compose this newsletter, Mary and I are on a "Fall Color Tour". So far, we have traveled to Beckley, WV, then to Asheville, NC by way of the Blue Ridge Parkway, and will head to Charleston, SC tomorrow. The parkway is a lovely and laid-back alternative to the speedy interstate highways. However, you live and learn; the couple of hundred miles on the parkway would be better done over a period of two or three days where you could stop and take in the attractions and vistas at an even more leisurely pace. None-the-less, what lovely views we had on the parkway despite the fact that we are maybe a week or two ahead of peak color! This is our first and favorite Autumn trip together! Do any of you have stories of a favorite Autumn trip?

HCRTA NEWS: November 2nd, 2020 HCRTA Meeting:

We may be retired from teaching, but we never retire from learning! In November, HCRTA is going to give you the opportunity to expand your technology-skills portfolio.

The HCRTA Executive Committee met this morning. Given that we miss each of you so much and that our November meeting traditionally covers the important topics of updates regarding STRS health care and members benefits, plus election of local officers, we have made the decision to hold our November 2nd meeting online via Zoom. Given that in-person meetings are still not recommended, we felt that this would be a reasonable alternative. We are hopeful that each of you will make an attempt to join us. I will do my best to give anyone who needs help as much assistance as you need to get connected.

The Zoom meeting will be at 11:00 AM on November 2, 2020. You can connect with audio and video using a computer, tablet, or smart phone. Alternatively, you may listen to the audio-only with a cell phone or land line.

Zoom Meeting ID: 864 3059 0344

Meeting Password: **051844**

- ⇒ If you just want to listen on your phone, with no video, you can call in by dialing 1-646-558-8656, then when prompted, keying in the meeting ID, and passcode.
- ⇒ If you have a digital copy of this newsletter, you can click this link to automatically connect to the meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86430590344?pwd=U1p1UmNmbFdDNW5zdldSMHhPYjVlQT09>
- ⇒ If you have a smart phone with texting, data and an internet connection, TEXT ME (937-402-7642) and I will send you the link.
- ⇒ The meeting room will open up at 10:15 AM to allow individuals extra time to get logged in and trouble shoot!
- ⇒ If you are not sure how to join a zoom meeting, see the final page of this newsletter for a guided tutorial.
- ⇒ If you would like to practice connecting to zoom ahead of November 2nd, call or text me and we can do an individual trial run (937-402-7642)

Tamla Cole, of STRS Ohio, will provide the STRS Health and Member Benefits update near the beginning of the Zoom meeting. Following Tamla's presentation, we will conduct our business meeting, also on zoom.

Over the last few months, we have asked you to hold-off sending checks or cash for dues and donations. Treasurer Doris Pulse is now comfortable with receiving and going out to deposit checks. Therefore, we are asking that you use the form near the end of this letter to send in your dues, make scholarship donations, or contribute to service projects.

Our November service project will be to support Christmas gifts foster children in our area. Monkey Beans Giving Closet, a 501 (c) 3 organization is designed to help foster children. It is located near Sardinia and serves children in our area. All money given will go to provide Christmas gifts for the neediest foster children, to be identified by Highland County Children's Services. Remember, Monkey Beans Giving Closet is a 501 (c) 3 group, therefore, any money donated can be a legal tax deduction. (If you want your donation to be tax deductible, please write a separate check for your donation amount, made out to Monkey Beans Giving Closet, which Doris can then forward.)

As noted in previous newsletters, this summer we have awarded two HCRTA scholarships and one Harold W. Spargur Scholarship to three outstanding future educators. Remember, we now have the opportunity to honor the memory of colleagues, friends, and relatives who have passed in 2020 with scholarship donation.

As mentioned earlier, in November, we elect our local officers. At this point the current officers are willing to serve again, if we have no additional nominations. If you are interested in serving as an officer or wish to nominate someone for office, please let one of the officers know as soon as possible. As of now, the current slate of officers are as follows:

Bob Hottle	–	President
Paul “Jim” Faust	–	Vice-President
Doris Pulse	–	Treasurer
Kevin Black	–	Secretary

The members present on zoom will vote on officers.

In addition to officers, we would appreciate, volunteers to chair or assist the following standing committees:

Membership; Legislative; Community Service; Pre-Retirement; Phone Chain; and Scholarship

STRS, ORTA, and ODE News

I'm not sure how many of you read the ORTA newsletter when it comes, but again the ORTA September 2020 newsletter brought interesting insights from Executive Director Dr. Rayfield regarding STRS Ohio. In his section of the monthly newsletter Dr. Rayfield said:

*I recently listened to the STRS Board as they met in a virtual setting again in September. The news is not good. Although the stock market has rebounded from most of the COVID losses, our funding level has not improved. Remember, STRS has in place a policy that states there will be no benefit increases until the system is funded at 85%. We are currently in the mid 70% range. Some positive news, however, is one STRS board member did ask directly, what is going on with the COLA issue. It seems like a very long time ago that the board took away our guaranteed benefit increase (2017). For many STRS retirees, they have not received any increase since 2014. For all retirees, we have experienced a loss of what was promised for 5, soon to be 6 years! Wade Steen asked the 'experts' offering advice to the investors at STRS several pointed questions. In one exchange Mr. Steen asked if the bench- mark that the alternative investment group had established was unrealistic or is that group of investors under performing? Although the advisor would not say that the group was under performing the advisor did say the benchmark was a realistic and appropriate benchmark. Mr. Steen is currently my favorite STRS board member. I sense that he recognizes that retirees cannot live forever without any benefit increase. At one time he pointed out that, under the current projections provided by the STRS staff, the pension system does not reach the 85% level required for COLA consideration before **2037**. That is right, the chart used during the discussion went out to 2037 and the funding level remained below **80%**. Mr. Steen said something to the effect that 'we need answers and suggestions as to how the system can reach the level to provide increases to retirees.*

Dr. Rayfield and ORTA President Kara Mendenhall both made mention of the ORTA Podcast. If you have not listened yet the first two episodes are interesting listens. The podcasts can be accessed at:

- Apple Devices: <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/ortacast/id1530823258>
- Spotify: https://open.spotify.com/show/40jqvsEcBOjjz6xbL6wfZn?si=jCcl5R0wRx-riz8eQ4_xXw
- Online at the ORTA Website: <https://www.orta.org/news>
- Or search for ORTACAST on your favorite Podcast App

This and other news can be found online:

- Ohio Department of Education: <http://education.ohio.gov/Miscellaneous/News/>
- Ohio Legislative News: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/>
- STRS Ohio News: <https://www.strsoh.org/publications/>
- ORTA News: <https://www.orta.org/news>
- HCRTA: <https://hcrta.weebly.com>

President Bob Hottle Update:

As of the Executive Meeting on 9/30/2020, Bob’s daughter reported that...

“Bob is under Hospice care in his home.

He had a pulmonary embolism that resulted in major health complications, intubation and a month long stay in the ICU & hospital. Meanwhile, his brain cancer worsened. He is able to speak and is alert although tired, a natural disease progression.”

Please keep Bob in your continued prayers.



(Cut and Return this Portion)
Doris Pulse, HCRTA Treasurer, 11740 State Route 753, Greenfield, OH 45123

Name: _____

_____ HCRTA 2020 Dues	\$ _____
_____ ORTA 2020 Dues	\$ _____
_____ HCRTA 2020 Dues	\$ _____
_____ ORTA 2021 Dues	\$ _____

_____ HCRTA Scholarship Fund \$ _____

- In memory of _____
- In honor of _____

Name & Address of family to be notified:

_____ Spargur Scholarship Fund \$ _____

Total Enclosed: \$ _____

Additional comments:

Place this portion and your check in an envelope & return to Doris Pulse, HCRTA Treasurer, 11740 State Route 753, Greenfield, OH 45123.

HIGHLAND COUNTY RETIRED TEACHERS ASSOC. FINANCIAL REPORT - Sept. 29, 2020

Balance as of April 4, 2020 **\$3190.47**

Receipts

March Dues	\$ 10.00	
April 2020 Spargur Fund	50.00	
July/August 2020		
Local Dues	10.00	
ORTA Dues	30.00	
Spargur Scholarship Fund	364.97	
Scholarship General Fund	475.00	
TOTAL Receipts	\$ 959.97	
Balance Plus Receipts		\$4150.97

Expenses

Scholarship		
The Ohio State University	\$ 500.00	
Ohio University	500.00	
Wilmington College	500.00	
Total Expenses	\$1500.00	
Balance minus expenses		\$2650.46

CD's

NCD Bank 19 month	\$ 1155.64
NCB Bank 18 month	1046.58
USB bank	689.83
Total	\$ 2842.05

HCRTA checking account balance	\$ 2650.46
(includes \$1071.60 set aside for general scholarships Plus \$50.00 in Spargur scholarship fund)	

CD's	2842.05
Total Assets	\$ 5492.51

Respectfully Submitted,
Doris Pulse, Treasurer

Necrology Report: (Synopsis)

Given that we are not meeting in person, we again felt it appropriate to memorialize our former colleagues by including the necrology report in this newsletter. As such, what follows is a synopsis of a report sent by Cindy.

Cindy noted that she has included three prominent citizens that deserve recognition for their accomplishments and contributions to our community. (Wanda Lewis, Kay Ayres, and Dr. Paul Terrell)

Paul Edgar Orr, 96, of Greenfield, passed away peacefully Sunday, June 28, 2020 at his home. He taught, coached or was an administrator at Hamilton Twp., Greenfield McClain, and Fairfield Local as well as serving as Highland County Court bailiff.

Deborah Lynn Mangus, 53, passed away peacefully on July 9. Deborah dedicated her life to the Fremont and Fairfield Local School systems for over 30 years.

Alan David Simmons, 66, of Lynchburg, passed away unexpectedly on Thursday, July 9, 2020 at his home. Alan was a history teacher and coach for Lynchburg-Clay High School, then went on to be principal at Fayetteville-Perry High School and later a superintendent at Eastern High School. Alan was also a dean at Chatfield College and he taught history classes at Southern State Community College.

Betty L. Nichols, 89, of Lynchburg, passed away Monday, July 13, 2020 at her home. She was a bus driver for the Lynchburg School District for many years.

Irene Conley Wills, 79, of Lynchburg and New Smyrna Beach, Florida, passed away Friday, August 7, 2020. Irene completed 30 years of teaching at Lynchburg-Clay Schools.

Joyce A. Orr, 75, of Hillsboro, worked at Marshall school, passed away Friday, July 24, 2020.

Wanda Lou Kesler Lewis, not a teacher but a well-known Cincinnati television icon, "Captain Wendy", and mother of member Dianne Jolitz, died peacefully at the age of 94 on August 17, 2020.

Kathleen H. "Kay" Ayres, 81, of Hillsboro, passed away on Monday, August 2020. She was a teacher of history and civics in Bethel until her marriage to David Ayres on March 10, 1961. Kay was active as a volunteer in her local community while raising her children and was a big supporter of 4-H. She also served on the Board of Directors of Southern State Community College by appointment of the governor.

Dr. Paul William "Doc" Terrell, 83, of Hillsboro, passed away Saturday, August 22, 2020 at his home. Doc served Highland County residents as a practicing physician and county coroner for a total of more than 30 years.

Robert A. Chain, 84, of Chillicothe, passed away Wednesday, September 16, 2020. Robert was a 1954 graduate of Edward Lee McClain High School and served as former rural carrier for the Greenfield Post Office, as well as a bus driver for the Greenfield Exempted Village Schools.

Wesley Kenneth "Ken" Roush, 78, of Hillsboro, passed away Wednesday, September 16, 2020 at his home. Ken was the husband of retired Hillsboro City Schools teacher Judith Roush. He taught for 32 years, mostly at Blanchester Local Schools, as a sixth-grade science teacher. After he retired as an educator, he drove a bus for years for Hillsboro City Schools.

William Franklin "Bill" Soards, 86, of Greenfield, passed away Saturday, September 19, 2020. He spent 27 years as the clerk/treasurer for the Greenfield Exempted Village Schools.

HOW TO ATTEND A ZOOM MEETING

Zoom is an online video and audio-conferencing platform. It allows a group of people to meet and hold a discussion, but be in different places, such as in each person's home. All you need is a Smart phone, a computer or a basic cell or land line phone (to hear audio only).

Zoom Meeting ID: 864 3059 0344

Meeting Password: **051844**

Android Phone OR iPhone:

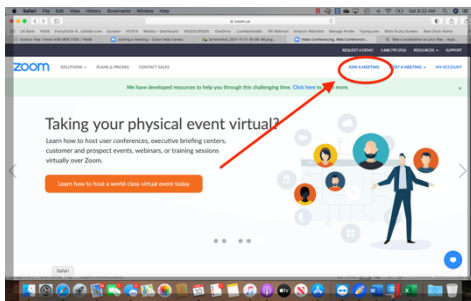
1. If you have not already done so, download the Zoom App from the Google Play store or the Apple App Store.
2. Open the Zoom mobile app.
3. Click the Join icon



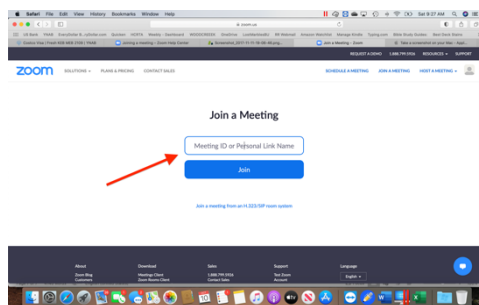
4. Enter the [meeting ID](#) number (864 3059 0344) and your display name.
5. Click Join
6. When prompted click call using Internet Audio

Computer:

1. On a computer open whatever program you usually use to go to the Internet (a web browser such as Safari, Internet Explorer, Chrome, or Edge).
2. Find and Click on the link that says "Join a Meeting"



3. The browser MAY download a small file or extension at this point
4. Enter the meeting ID (864 3059 0344) then click Join



5. If prompted to allow the page to open zoom.us, click allow.
6. If prompted, enter your name.
7. If prompted, select use Internet Audio.

DIAL IN (for Audio Only connection):

1. Dial 1-646-558-8656
2. Key in the meeting ID (864 3059 0344)