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FROM OUR PRESIDENT



2018 ORTA President, Bee Lehner

Dear ORTA Members,

Since our last newsletter, I have had the privilege of attending two regional ORTA meetings and six chapter meetings. Let me tell you, the energy and enthusiasm of our “Ohio Retired Teachers” is running high!

On Tuesday, May 15th, the **Southeast Regional Liaisons, Brenda Davis, Don Ullmann, and Karen Butt**, hosted a chapter presidents’ meeting at the Best Western in Marietta, Ohio. Dr. Robin Rayfield and I were present to share updates on the status of the COLA and Strategic Planning, as well as our “membership incentive program.” **Hope Short**, an STRS Member Education Specialist reported on STRS updates and District Manager, **Jim Cain**, from AMBA, shared “new” programs and opportunities for retired ORTA members.

A delicious luncheon and a host of door prizes were enjoyed by the attendees. Finally, a big thanks to Deloris Ullmann for entertaining us on her mandolin!

On Monday, June 11th, **Northeast Liaison, Kendra Burger**, met with her 6-county presidents at the Dutch Valley Restaurant in Sugarcreek, Ohio. Attendees enjoyed a hot buffet breakfast, followed by ORTA/STRS updates from Dr. Rayfield and me. The presidents each shared information on the “structure of their chapter, what motivates their members to become chapter leaders, and ways to increase membership.” Kendra dismissed her guests with a loaf of Amish bread and a jar of jam! A big thanks to these liaisons for the hard work they put into providing these opportunities to their chapter presidents! Also, “thank you” to Alissa Burton, our ORTA Publisher, for attending these meetings and providing our “photo opportunity!”

As Dr. Rayfield, Randy Overbeck, Gale Adkins, and I travel Ohio to attend chapter meetings, we’re amazed at the creative ideas chapters have come up with in sharing their resources and concern for their communities! Here are a few of the highlights from my visits this past month!

The **Cambridge** chapter of ORTA has created a “One-Room Schoolhouse Fund” which helps to preserve Guernsey County’s one-room schoolhouses by posting signs throughout the county for visitors!

The **Tuscarawas County** chapter meets each year in May for a “memorial service” for their departed members and a “scholarship presentation” for qualified senior students who have a relative who belongs to the Tuscarawas chapter. Attendance is always high at this meeting!

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The **Jefferson County** ORTA chapter has helped sponsor the renovation of the Pleasant Hill School a one-room school near Toronto, Ohio. They also volunteer their manpower for elementary students' spring fieldtrips! For the past several years they have raised money for the Steubenville Nutcracker Village which is in partnership with the Old Fort Steuben Project. These more than life-size nutcrackers can be seen the first two weeks in December!

Fayette County's chapter held their "ORTA Day" on June 7th. I was invited to speak on ORTA updates and AMBA representative, Andrea Bussert, shared her information with attendees. This chapter also honors their deceased members at this spring meeting, as well as presenting a scholarship to a local graduating senior!

Coshocton County RTA chapter promotes a different community project at each of their four chapter meetings. June's recipient was Clary's Garden, who holds outdoor "gardening and discovery workshops" for local elementary students in the summer. Chapter members are encouraged to bring in small buckets, rakes, magnifying glasses, bug nets, etc. for these classes!

Finally, each year the **Medina County RTA** chapter offers teachers an opportunity to apply for the Nancy M. Boomhower Grant, which provides "excitement and possibilities" in Medina County classrooms. Four of the five recipients were present to share their unique programs! Here are some of the amazing ways these teachers utilized their grants!

- "Stand By Me"**-a middle school anti-bullying program
- "Books for Silent Reading"**-a middle school classroom library
- "Positive Behavior Interventions"**-a middle school program
- "Coding and Technology Club"**-an elementary program
- "Gritty Graphing"**-a junior high program

WOW! Our ORTA chapters are working hard to support their **CURRENT** members, **FUTURE** members and their communities! Thank you for all you do! **REMEMBER:** Your ORTA committee members are all anxious to be invited to attend one of your chapter meetings, so please give any of us a call or call the ORTA office and Mia or Alissa will schedule us in to meet your members!

Summer Break: ***A time when parents realize that teachers are grossly underpaid!***

Summer Break: ***The time of the year when teachers can go to the bathroom when they need to!***

Enjoy the Days of Summer!

Yours Truly,
Bee Lehner, ORTA President

FROM THE DESK OF OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Dr. Robin Rayfield, ORTA Executive Director

Salutations to All Faithful ORTA Members!

I hope that all is well with each of you and you were able to attend the commencement services of family and friends over the last few weeks. It is a special time for educators as we see the future of our nation mature and head off to the next chapters in their lives.

STRS News

As a result of my comments at the STRS meeting in April, Mike Nehf and his senior staff visited ORTA to meet with President Bee Lehner and myself. I had asked the STRS Board of Trustees to provide some type of 'road map' or 'pathway' to COLA so that STRS recipients might be able to monitor the progress of the return to increases in our monthly checks. Mr. Nehf, Mr. Snyder, and Mr. Treneff spent an entire morning providing information and answering questions that we had. As a result of our meeting, the folks at STRS agreed to continue working with ORTA to provide a vehicle that will be easy to understand and show the progress STRS is making towards to goal of providing enhanced benefits to all STRS recipients. I am encouraged by what I have heard in my discussions with Director Nehf.

In other STRS news, a positive action passed by the STRS Board of Trustees will result in more money in the pockets of many STRS recipients. At the May meeting, the STRS Board of Trustees decided to continue a subsidy for the Part B Medicare insurance recipients. If you recall, a **\$29.90** subsidy for Medicare insurance participants was scheduled to be eliminated on January 1, 2019. ORTA had argued against this reduction in benefit. Through our advocacy as part of the HPA group and considering the solid financial situation that the STRS Healthcare Fund is in, STRS determined not to reduce the subsidy for Medicare recipients.

eHello

Recently, eHello contacted ORTA with an opportunity for retired teachers in Ohio. eHello is an educational online company that operates in the Pacific Rim countries. Their purpose is to help learners with their English skills. To that end, eHello hires retired teachers from the United States to 'tutor' Chinese speaking students with their conversational English skills. Retired teachers can earn money while helping foreign students master our language. Any ORTA member that would like more information can contact eHello at www.ehello.com to learn more. Or contact **Joe Altomere at 615-470-2360.**

Restore our COLA

Many of you may be aware of an online petition that is circulating throughout the STRS community. I have received several questions about whether 'we should sign this petition'. I will let you know that I signed the petition. I signed because I believe STRS recipients should be receiving a COLA. I believe that I was promised a COLA when I retired and that I should be receiving such. Now, I don't necessarily agree with some of what is presented in the narrative attached to the petition drive, however, I do believe that the answer to our COLA may lie with the legislators.

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ORTA is committed to the return of annual COLAs or benefit enhancements. Of course, the financial conditions must be present to insure the health of the STRS system, but the retirees of the system must be provided for. If a petition will help bring the plight of retirees to the attention of the State House, then I'm all for signing. Having said that, I am also concerned with what actions the legislative body might take on this matter. I can't recall many times that the elected officials in our state did anything positive for educators. To view the petition, please follow this link: <https://www.change.org/p/ohio-state-house-respect-ohio-s-retired-teachers-restore-their-promised-cola>

Partners of ORTA

This is just a reminder that ORTA has partnered with several other entities to offer benefits beyond ORTA's advocacy for our pension protections. Most are aware of the many insurance related products offered to ORTA members through our partners at AMBA. ORTA is also partnered with **Road Scholars**. This is an opportunity for ORTA members to capitalize on their experiences and serve as a travel ambassador to places in the U.S. and other exotic countries. Another partner **Education First Credit Union** offers outstanding banking opportunities including great rates on deposits or loans in addition to routine banking services such as savings and checking accounts. EFCU also offers financial incentives of ORTA dues payments for any ORTA members that open accounts with their credit union. As a financial institution that caters to educators and retired education sector employees, EFCU understands the challenges ORTA members face.

Regional President's Meeting Updates

Over the last couple of months, the newly appointed ORTA Regional Liaisons have been meeting with local RTA chapter presidents. I was fortunate to be able to attend a few of these meetings. Southeast Ohio Liaisons Don Ullmann, Brenda Davis, and Karen Butt organized a terrific meeting in Marietta, Ohio for the presidents of chapters of ORTA. The program was informative and helped to bring an understanding of the goals of ORTA to the local presidents in attendance. Kendra Burger organized a president's meeting of 6 local RTAs from the Northeast in Sugarcreek, Ohio. Presidents were able to share what is taking place at their local RTA and offer ideas for membership growth and popular programs.

Best Regards,

Dr. Robin Rayfield

LAUGH OF THE MONTH

Q: What is the music teachers favorite song?

A: "Nobody knows the "trebles" I've seen..."



SWEET REWARDS IN BUTLER CO.!



Pictured Above: BCRTA Scholarship recipients Molly Arent, Adrianna Barnett and Andrea Kaufhold
(Not Pictured: Laura Medina)

The **Butler County Retired Teachers Association** continued its tradition of awarding four **\$1000.00** scholarships at the May 16 General Membership meeting. Each scholarship was awarded to a Butler County graduating senior who plans to enter college in the fall to pursue a career in teaching.

Molly Arent plans to attend Ball State University to pursue a degree in elementary education.

Adrianna Barnett plans to attend Miami University to pursue a degree in high school English.

Andrea Kaufhold plans to attend Bowling Green State University to pursue a degree in secondary music.

Laura Medina plans to attend Miami University to pursue a degree in secondary math. (Laura was not able to attend.)

Congratulations to the scholarship recipients, from all of us at ORTA!

Many thanks to the scholarship committee for making the difficult decisions: **Dianne Aiken**, chairperson; **Jane Hansley**, **Susan Smith** and **Beverly Worley**.

To learn more about the Butler Co. chapter, please visit their chapter [website](#).

REGIONAL HIGHLIGHTS: SOUTHEAST CHAPTER PRESIDENTS MEETING IN MARIETTA OHIO

The **Southeast Region** held it's first Regional Chapter Presidents Meeting, in Marietta, Ohio on May 15th. The meeting consisted of door prizes, a mandolin performance from Deloris Ullmann, a warm welcome from the Marietta city Mayor, Joe A. Matthews, guest speaker Hope Short from STRS, and a presentation from AMBA team Jim Cain and Dennis Evans.

Among this, President Bee Lehner had the opportunity to speak on the recent changes in ORTA and the new direction, which was well received. Dr. Robin Rayfield also spoke about his plans with the new re-organization of regions and how chapter presidents are a great resource in their education community.

A great big thank you to the hard work and planning from the **Regional Liaison** team of **Don Ullmann, Brenda Davis and Karen Butt.**



Deloris Ullmann and Lori Tilton welcomed guests.



Southeast Liaison Don Ullmann welcoming the chapters, and going over the time-line of the day



STRS speaker Hope Short talking about the measures STRS takes to better serve it's retirees. (Above)



Southeast Liaison Brenda Davis introducing the next guest speaker



ORTA representatives, President Bee Lehner and executive Director, Robin Rayfield



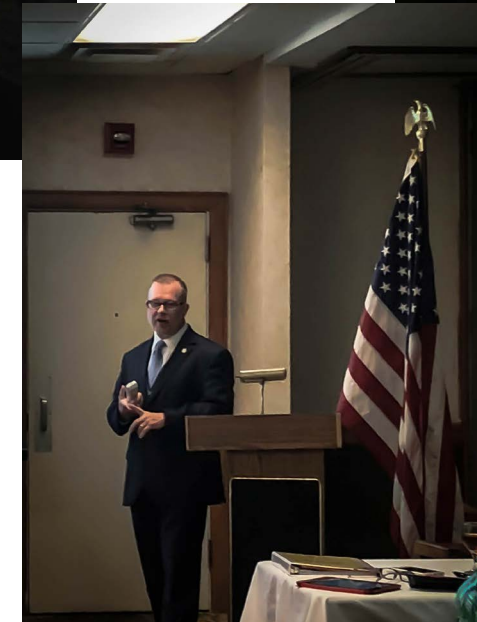
Marietta Mayor, Joe A. Matthews welcoming ORTA to their community.



Deloris Ullmann, providing the afternoons entertainment with her mandolin talents



Southeast Liaison, Karen Butt, showing off her raffled door prize!



AMBA representative Jim Cain, explaining the benefits of AMBA memberships.



LICKING CO. REWARDS FRUITS OF "LABOR"

The **Licking County Retired Teachers Association** along with The Licking Know Central Labor Council and the Freedom School in Licking County Awarded two scholarships of \$500 each to seniors in Licking and Muskingum County High Schools.

The recipients who wrote essays about the struggles of working people to organize and work for a better life were **Jody Choberka** and **Hannah Stoepfel**.



On hand at the award ceremony held on May 23rd at the USWA Local Union Hall, were representatives of local unions, **the Central Labor Council, the Licking County Retired Teacher's Association** and **the Freedom School in Licking County**, as well as City Councilmen Bill Cost and Jeremy Blake, and retired Councilwoman Carol Floyd.

Both recipients of the scholarship plan to use them to further their education and to educate other young people.

Congratulations to both recipients!

To learn more about the Licking Co. chapter, please visit their chapter [website](#).



A DAY IN MAY WITH MAHONING CO.

The **Mahoning Co. Retired Teachers Association** held it's spring meeting in May at Drakes Landing, in Canfield, Ohio.

At this meeting, the chapter eulogized and honored the 2017-2018 deceased members. A book titled "**60 Minutes: Fifty Years of Great Stories**", has been purchased in behalf of the "**John M. Knapick Memorial**" to honor these members. It will be placed in the permanent collection of the Public Library of Youngstown and Mahoning County.

The chapter also took time to recognize members who are "80 and older". Among these members is **Mary Allgood**, who was recognized as the chapters oldest member over 100, along with 100 year old **Francis Ritz**, who was unable to attend and was also honored for her YSU Achievement Award and 48 years of teaching.

Also at this meeting, the chapter hosted guest speaker the extension director of horticulture with OSU, Eric Barrett.

To learn more about the Mahoning Co. chapter, please visit their [website](#).



Pictured Above: MCRTA members "80 and Older" were honored. Mary Allgood (center), was recognized as the oldest "over 100", along with 100 year old Francis Ritz (not pictured, unable to attend) honored for her YSU Achievement Award and 48 years of teaching.



Pictured Above: MCRTA President Susan Harris, Sally Knapick Winsen. In-Memoriam chairperson, Martha Lopez, Remembrance chairperson, and Karne Kimmel, Historian.



Pictured Above: MCRTA President Susan Harris and Program Chairpersin Phil Butto welcomed Eric Barrett, the OSU extension director of Horticulture as their guest speaker.



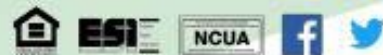
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LOOKING AHEAD IN LOGAN CO.

The **Logan County Retired Teachers Association** met for their first meeting of 2018 in April. Over 40 people attended, and it was held at the Bellefontaine First United Methodist Church with dinner provided.

Entertainment was graciously given by harpists' Josephine and Jillian Davis.

ORTA Executive Director Dr. Robin Rayfield, former ORTA representative B.J. Woodruff, and new ORTA Southwest Liaison Ralph Moon all gave brief talks to the members.

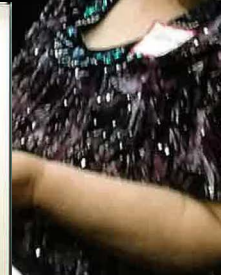
Also present, were four of the six winners of the Lucy Brown classroom grants. Those who attended were **Melissa Printy, Rebekah Troyer, Donna Brunner** and **Marie Baughman**.

Each teacher explained what they plan to use the **\$250** grant for in the classrooms. The grants ranged from alternative seating, to science equipment and new library books.

President Emerson Brown awards six classrooms with grants in memory his wife Lucy Brown — a former elementary school teacher. This was the first time President Brown took on this worthwhile project. He plans to continue it for next year.

The LCRTA will meet again on June 21st.

To learn more about the Logan Co. chapter, please visit their [Facebook page](#).



ORTA Executive Director,
Dr. Robin Rayfield

ORTA Southwest Liaison Ralph Moon



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WHAT'S ORTA UP TO?



Take a look at what's coming up in July around our chapters and where our Executive Director, Executive Committee and Liaisons will be! The calendar is always available on our website. Follow the link to view: <http://www.orta.org/calendar.html>

Wednesday, July 4
Independence Day
Monday, July 9
11:30am Paulding Co. Retired Teachers Assn. Chapter Meeting
5:30pm Henry Co. Retired Teachers Assn. Chapter Meeting
Wednesday, July 11
12:00pm Athens County Retired Teachers Assn. Meeting
12:00pm Butler Co. Retired Teachers Assn. Chapter Meeting
Thursday, July 19
11:30am Portage Co. Retired Teachers Assn. Chapter Meeting
Friday, July 20
11:30am ORTA Day @ Alliance Area Retired Teachers Assn. Chapter Meeting

WINNING IN WOOD CO.!



Each year the **Wood Co. Retired Teachers Association** presents a book grant to a senior who will be attending a four year college with a major of Education.

The Book Grant has been awarded to **Jordyn Lenox**, a senior at Otsego High School. She will be entering Bowling Green State University this fall with a major of Middle School Math & Science.

Congratulations, Jordyn!

To learn more about the Wood Co. Book Grant, please visit their chapter [website](#).

Pictured Above: ORTA Executive Director Dr. Robin Rayfield, Book Grant winner Jordyn Lenox and Wood Co. President Don Bright

HAVE YOU PAID YOUR YEARLY ORTA DUES?

A friendly reminder that if you need to renew your ORTA dues (\$30), now is the time!

You can now pay online ([click here](#)) with credit card, making it faster and more convenient than ever. We can of course still accept checks mailed to the office at:

**8050 N. High Street
Suite 190
Columbus, Ohio 43235**

Your membership is important! We are here to serve you. Your membership helps keep us going, so we want to say thank you for your loyalty to ORTA, and we wouldn't be here without **YOU**.

***PLEASE SEE THE BACK PAGE TO FILL OUT YOUR RENEWAL DUES FORM TO SEND TO US WITH YOUR CHECK PAYMENT**



A PHENOLOGY LESSON IN PICKAWAY CO.

The **Pickaway County Retired Teachers Association** had ten members travel to the Pickaway County Phenology Garden May 23 for a time of food, fellowship and education about the unique study of Phenology as presented by PCRTA member Phenology Garden expert Vickie Lamb. More field trips to sites of local interest are to be planned.

The Memorial Service at the May 16th meeting went well with the help of fellow members. Memories of working with the deceased members who were remembered, reminded members how people touch lives with their actions. Members honored were **Linda Coe, Dora Moss, and Vera Steinhauser.**

To learn more about the Pickaway Co. chapter, please visit their [website](#).



IN MEMORIAM:

It is with great sadness that ORTA reports the passing of these **Mahoning Co.** members:

Larry Grist
Helen Kubic
Lena Centofanti
Ted Vestal
Angela Manginelli
Lillian Jacobs

We are also very saddened to announce the loss of James Hansen, spouse of **Sandusky Co.** chapter leader, past **ORTA President** and **Northwest Liaison**, Edna Hansen.

Our condolences are with the families and loved ones at this difficult time.

**Do you know deceased members you would like ORTA to list in this section? If so, please see our new page on our website ([click here](#)).*

“It’s hard to forget someone who has given you so much to remember.”
–Unknown



With Sympathy...



We want to put you and your chapter in the monthly newsletter! Contact Alissa at publications@orta.org, or download a submission from our website ([click here](#)) and send all submission materials to:

Ohio Retired Teachers | Suite 190
c/o: Publications
8050 North High Street
Columbus, Ohio 43235

We can't wait to share your stories!



**OHIO RETIRED TEACHERS ASSOCIATION
ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM**
(PLEASE PRINT, TYPE OR USE PERSONAL NAME AND ADDRESS LABEL)

PLEASE FILL OUT AND RETURN WITH PAYMENT TO:
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8050 N. HIGH STREET | SUITE 190 | COLUMBUS, OHIO 43235

Please print, cut out, complete and send for your **yearly** payment.

NAME (AS LISTED WITH STRS)		PHONE NUMBER	
MAILING ADDRESS		APT.	CITY
STATE	ZIP	MEMBER ID NUMBER (IF AVAILABLE)	
E-MAIL <small>(IF APPLICABLE: FOR NEWSLETTER, ANNOUNCEMENTS ETC.)</small>	YEAR OF RETIREMENT	LIFE MEMBER OF ORTA?	
MEMBERSHIP(S) (CHECK ONE)			
<input type="checkbox"/> ORTA LIFE MEMBER \$500		<input type="checkbox"/> ORTA LIFE MEMBER (1/4 LIFE) \$125	
<input type="checkbox"/> ORTA LIFE MEMBER (1/2 LIFE) \$250		<input type="checkbox"/> ORTA ANNUAL DUES \$30	
COUNTY/LOCAL		TOTAL	

THANK YOU!
YOUR MEMBERSHIP IS
IMPORTANT TO US!



Please print, cut out, complete and send for your **NEW ORTA** membership.



**OHIO RETIRED TEACHERS ASSOCIATION
NEW MEMBERSHIP ENROLLMENT FORM**
(PLEASE PRINT, TYPE OR USE PERSONAL NAME AND ADDRESS LABEL)

PLEASE FILL OUT AND RETURN WITH PAYMENT TO:
OHIO RETIRED TEACHERS ASSN.
8050 N. HIGH STREET | SUITE 190 | COLUMBUS, OHIO 43235

NAME (AS LISTED WITH STRS)		PHONE NUMBER	
MAILING ADDRESS		APT.	CITY
STATE	ZIP	MEMBER ID NUMBER (IF AVAILABLE)	
E-MAIL <small>(IF APPLICABLE: FOR NEWSLETTER, ANNOUNCEMENTS ETC.)</small>	YEAR OF RETIREMENT	LIFE MEMBER OF ORTA?	
MEMBERSHIP(S) (CHECK ONE)			
<input type="checkbox"/> ORTA LIFE MEMBER \$500		<input type="checkbox"/> ORTA LIFE MEMBER (1/4 LIFE) \$125	
<input type="checkbox"/> ORTA LIFE MEMBER (1/2 LIFE) \$250		<input type="checkbox"/> ORTA NEW MEMBER DUES \$40	
COUNTY/LOCAL		TOTAL	

THANK YOU!
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