



MID-JEFFERSON COUNTY RETIRED SCHOOL PERSONNEL MAY 2014 NEWSLETTER



OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE

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Linda Briggs
President

Dana Wasser
First Vice President
Immediate Past President
Membership

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Second Vice President
Legislation

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Mary Beth McDuff
Treasurer

Ted Loftin
Parliamentarian

Becky Dungan
Yearbook Chairman

Lynne James
Newsletter
Technology Contact

Olive Hall
Local Historian

Sylvia Ramirez
Foundation Representative

Jessie Howard
Community Volunteer Services

Patsy Bartels
Member Benefits

Helen Reynolds
Healthcare

Linda Fong
Information & Protective Services

Rose Reese
Retirement Education

Patricia Allen
Children's Book Project

Donna Lumpkin
Refreshment & Hospitality

Wanda Borne
Audit

Be sure to vote in special election and runoffs!!



April 8, 2014
Program by
Tammy Lilly
Stroke Awareness

- ◆ **Next meeting:** May 13, 2014, @ Ritter Center in Nederland, 914 Boston Avenue—1:30
- ◆ **Program:** Installation of Officers
- ◆ **Refreshments:** Donna Lumpkin (Chairman), Susan Jones, Carolyn Martin, Dixie Tucker, and Linda Fong
- ◆ **District 5 Spring Leadership Training:** Friday, May 9, First Baptist Church in Nederland
- ◆ **Special election:** May 10 (early voting 4/28-5/6) to replace Senator Tommy Williams
- ◆ **Runoff election:** May 27 (Republican and Democratic parties)

A word of thanks . . . a message from MJCRSP President Linda Briggs

Thanks to MJCRSP's hard-working dedicated officers and committee chairmen my two years as president has been very fulfilling. Their leadership, along with the support of the members, has made us an outstanding local unit. I really appreciate everyone's help, and I believe MJCRSP will continue to succeed with such a strong new team.

TRTA's accomplishments, especially during the 2013 legislative session, have made it respected and powerful to legislators and the public as well. At the convention Sen. Wendy Davis, Lt. Governor David Dewhurst, and Attorney General Greg Abbott's video all attested to our voting importance. However, the upcoming TRS-Care crisis will be our most challenging issue, requiring us to work harder than ever to recruit members and voice our concerns.



A membership form is again attached to this message. Note that dues have increased at the state level, and for a very good reason. TRTA dues have not increased since 1999, but costs have escalated. In order to keep a quality staff, TRTA must meet basic salary needs. Attacks by well-funded outside groups have been costly to defend against, and legal support has been needed to help defend retiree benefits. Even at \$45, we get our money's worth with TRTA!

Renew YOUR membership and invite an ACTIVE TEACHER to join!

VISIT OUR WEB SITE: To keep up with meetings and activities of MJCRSP, check out the unit web site at www.localunits.org/MidJefferson. Now available is the 2013-2014 yearbook. It is password protected and only current members will have access. If you are a current member who does not have a password or if you have joined recently, email Lynne James (lynnej@gt.rr.com) or call 409.735.6171 and ask for her.

SPECIAL THANKS to MCT Credit Union and Hebert Library for the use of their facilities in preparing our monthly newsletters.

April highlights



Linda Briggs presides in April; Helen Reynolds gives tips about eating habits; Jessie Howard visits with guest Tammy Lilly; refreshment committee of Susan Jones, Donna Lumpkin, Linda Fong, Dixie Tucker, and Carolyn Martin are ready to serve!

Convention highlights

For many years, retirees have been able to count on a healthcare plan as a part of retirement benefits. That program is now in crisis. Retirees must become familiar with all aspects of this healthcare crisis. Carefully read all communications from TRS and become familiar with the names of all state and national legislators. Make contact with candidates, and when you do, identify yourself as either a **retired educator and a member of TRTA**. Ask each candidate specifically if he or she is in favor of **legislature providing funding for our healthcare**. Many will say, "I support a fully funded healthcare system for retired teachers," but they are hesitant to say **who** should provide the funding. Pin them down! It is imperative that retirees support candidates who are **for** public education in the state of Texas.



TRTA Executive Director Tim Lee, State Senate candidate Brandon Creighton, and District V Legislative Chairman Richard Briggs.

(1) District V delegates to the TRTA State Convention; (2) MJCRSP delegates meet with the house of delegates; (3) Linda Briggs presides at the District V caucus; (4) TRTA President Marydell Fryar calls the convention to order; (5) TRTA Executive Director addresses the house of delegates; (6) Loretta Morman and Linda Briggs enjoy snacks at the opening day reception; (7) Lynne James and Loretta Morman pose with keynote speaker Tumbleweed Smith.

TRTA supported adequate funding of our retirement fund in the 2013 legislative session, and with the help of Senators Tommy Williams and Wendy Davis, Representative Allan Ritter, and others, the fund is now actuarially sound. However, Williams and Ritter have chosen not to seek re-election. So, we must begin again finding legislative support. Vote in the **May 10** special election to replace Senator Williams, and in the **May 28** run-off election to replace Ritter. But . . . make an **informed** decision when you decide for whom to cast your ballot! In addition, the position of lieutenant governor is equally important, as the person elected has control over which items come before the legislature. Some of the candidates for this position **do not support government-funded pensions or government-funded healthcare!** This is not the time to sit back and let someone else determine our future.

HELEN'S HEALTH TIP: Limit red meat (pork, lamb, deer, buffalo, and beef) to 18 ounces per week, approximately the size of 8 golf balls, 6 decks of cards, 6 bars of soap, 5 tennis balls, or 2 soft balls.

HELEN'S REQUEST: If you did not sign the list of those who exercise regularly (3-4 times per week) at the April meeting, be sure to sign this list at the May meeting or email me (helen-reynolds@sbcglobal.net) as soon as possible. I need the total number of members who exercise regularly for my annual health report that is due June 1. Your name will not be reported.