

MID-JEFFERSON COUNTY RETIRED SCHOOL PERSONNEL NOVEMBER 2016 NEWSLETTER



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October Program

BRIAN PERKINS

AETNA REPRESENTATIVE

- ◆ **Next Meeting:** Tuesday, November 8, 2016 @1:30 PM, Ritter Senior Center, 914 Boston Avenue, Nederland
- ◆ **Program:** Stephanie Harren, Museum of the Gulf Coast
- ◆ **Hostesses:** Candye Martin (chairman), Linda Harrison, Beulah Thompson, Helen Reynolds, and Jolene Lemaire

Retirees and actives working together . . .

. . . a message from MJCRSP President Lynne James



At the October MJCRSP unit meeting, Legislative Chair Richard Briggs announced that a challenge to the TRS defined benefit plan is expected in the upcoming legislative session. This is a pet project of Lt. Governor Dan Patrick. The monthly defined benefit retirees now enjoy was determined at the time of retirement and can be increased, but not decreased, by the legislature. Maintaining the current defined benefit plan for all current and future TRS retirees is one of TRTA's primary legislative goals. The TRS pension fund has over \$130 billion in assets set aside to pay for the retirement benefits of 1.3 million public education retirees and pre-retirees. TRS has more than 375,000 retirees with an average annuity of \$2000 per month, but at the same time **105,000 retirees receive \$1000 or less per month**. Ninety-five percent of public school employees do not pay into Social Security and the vast majority of retirees do not receive *any* SS benefits due to the GPO and WEP. TRS is their sole form of retirement security!

The state contributes about 20% of the cost of TRS pension benefits while active educators contribute another 20%. Since the inception of TRS 80 years ago, investment income has accounted for 60% of the plan's funding. In 2014, TRS paid almost \$8.5 billion in retirement benefits, and 95% of these benefit payments went directly to retirees who live in and spend these dollars in Texas, a significant source of economic stimulus for Texas, providing for 112,939 permanent jobs statewide. Retirement benefits generated an estimated \$892 million in state revenues and \$342 million in local government revenues in 2014. **The rate of return on investments over the past 25 years is 8.6%**. Can a defined contribution plan like a 401K guarantee that much growth over 25 years?

To keep our defined benefit plan, retirees will be asked to contact state legislators before and during the next session. Your talking-points are outlined above. Be ready to do your part!

VISIT OUR WEBSITE: To keep up with meetings and activities of MJCRSP, check out the unit web site at www.localunits.org/MidJefferson. Please help us to save the cost of a stamp and agree to receive the newsletter by email. Contact Lynne James at lynnej@gt.rr.com or call her at 409.735.6171 and ask to be placed on the emailing list!

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

October meeting highlights



Row 1: Brian Perkins explains changes in TRS-Care as members listen attentively. **Row 2 (Left)** Members learn about TRS-Care for 2016-2017; Brian Perkins answers questions and assists Wanda Borne; **(Right):** October hostesses include Beulah Thompson, Linda Harrison, Helen Reynolds, Jolene Lemaire, and Candye Martin. **Row 3:** Dixie Tucker, Linda Fong, and Candice Zummo choose healthy treats; Jack and Barbara Pelloat enjoy refreshments as do Curtis Harrison and Rosalie Reese and Ted and Mary Lofton.



In just about any home, one can find a pair of eyeglasses that are no longer being used. That same pair of eyeglasses can change another person's life. Join the local LIONS and contribute your used eyeglasses. Donations accepted at MJCRSP meetings!

**2016 Volunteer Service Hours
due by January 10, 2017.
Start counting your hours now!**

HELEN'S HEALTH TIP: Carbohydrates (sugar, starches, and fiber) have a bad reputation but can be good for you and a good source of energy if you eat the right type. Starches (complex carbs, the healthy type) should make up 45 – 65 percent of your total daily calories; therefore, eat nuts, peas, beans, oatmeal, apples, pears and other fruits and vegetables every day!