



# MID-JEFFERSON COUNTY RETIRED SCHOOL PERSONNEL OCTOBER 2015 NEWSLETTER

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Audit

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Hospitality



**County Commissioner Brent Weaver, State Representative Dade Phelan, MJCRSP President Gail Krohn, and Legislative Chairman Richard Briggs at Fall Luncheon for new retirees**

- **District 5 Fall Conference, October 1, St. Mark's Episcopal Church, 680 Calder in Beaumont. Special Guests: Representative Dade Phelan and Representative John Otto, retired (formerly Chair, House Appropriations Committee)**
- **Next Meeting: Tuesday, October 13, 1:30 PM, , at Ritter Senior Center, 914 Boston Avenue, Nederland**
- **Program: Troy Gray of the Gladys City Lucas Gusher Museum**
- **Hostesses: Candye Martin (chairman), Helen Reynolds, Mary Beth McDuff, Linda Harrison, and Beulah Thompson**

## Let's do our part . . .



As we look toward the 2015 - 2016 year for MJCRSP, it is obvious we have work to do on several fronts. First is membership. We had the lowest attendance at our September luncheon meeting than we have had in years. True, it was the day after a holiday, which may have influenced attendance, but we only had two recent retirees attend. Surely some of us know someone who retired recently, and if so, a call before our October meeting would be in order. Second, Representative Dade Phelan brought us up to date on legislative issues pertaining to retirees. We didn't get everything we wanted, but our health insurance was taken care of for the next two years. He reminded us that many of the requests before the legislature went away with nothing. So, we cannot rest for two years because he shared that the surplus there during this session will not be there for the next session. Finally, we must make every effort to support active educators and help them understand their need to support us. We are their future and vice versus. We have to depend on each other and understand the financial need of both groups.

**VISIT OUR WEBSITE:** To keep up with meetings and activities of MJCRSP, check out the unit web site at [www.localunits.org/MidJefferson](http://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](mailto: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.

## September fall luncheon meeting highlights



**Row 1: No School Forever!** Theme for the annual fall luncheon for new retirees is depicted in table decorations; members begin all meetings with a prayer followed by pledges to the United States and Texas flags; attendees enjoy a fabulous lunch!. **Row 2:** Frances Glaze, Rose Davis, and Beulah Thompson share a table; Mary Beth McDuff, Martha Palmer, and Candye Martin enjoy good fellowship; Sue Croom, Patricia Allen, and Rhonda Posey are ready for dessert. **Row 3:** Commissioner Weaver, Representative Phelan, Richard Briggs, Jennifer Pate of Senator Robert Creighton's office, and Zach Johnson of Representative Phelan's office discuss important issues; Pam Choate is one of the first to arrive; new members Rhonda Posey and Martha Palmer, both from Nederland ISD, enjoy their first MJCRSP meeting; Representative Phelan gives members a detailed account of legislation from the recent session.

**LEGISLATIVE NEWS FROM TIM LEE:** The Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) is an unfair federal provision preventing retirees from receiving the Social Security benefits they are owed. It took effect in 1983 and provides a means of eliminating the "windfall" of Social Security benefits received by beneficiaries who also receive a pension based on work not covered by Social Security. Ninety-five percent of Texas public school employees do not pay into Social Security through their work with Texas schools. However, many have other jobs before, during, or after their employment in education in which they do pay into the federal program. **Congressman Kevin Brady's Equal Treatment of Public Servants Act (HR 711)** would replace the current WEP formula with a new, fairer one. TRTA representatives visited Washington, D.C., in March 2015, and advocated for HR 711's support from all Texas congressional members. **Sixteen Texas representatives chose to co-sponsor Brady's bill!** On average, the WEP reduces TRTA members' monthly incomes by \$400. HR 711 proposes to reduce the WEP's impact on current retirees by as much as 33 percent. Future retirees will see the WEP's impact reduced as much as 50 percent. Any increase in our Texas education retirees' fixed incomes greatly bolsters their retirement security. HR 711, if passed, would guarantee public servants receive the benefits they earned while they paid into Social Security. HR 711 would also increase lifetime Social Security benefits by \$20,000 to \$32,400. TRTA has a webpage dedicated to HR711, which can be located at <http://trta.org/legislation/wep/>. Check it out!

**HELEN'S HEALTH TIP:** Our unit can take great pride in our two consecutive awards for excellence in healthy living that show we are following the guidelines we have been given. Keep up the good work at the meetings and at home, and let's make it three consecutive awards this year.