

**OFFICERS  
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**Lynne James**  
President

**Gail Krohn**  
Immediate Past President  
Publicity & Nominations  
Scholarship

**Linda Harrison**  
First Vice President  
Membership

**Linda Briggs**  
Second Vice President  
Programs/Book Project

**Donna Lumpkin**  
Secretary

**Loretta Morman**  
Treasurer

**Dixie Tucker**  
Parliamentarian

**Richard Briggs**  
Legislation

**Patricia Allen**  
Social Media

**Becky Dungan**  
Yearbook

**Lynne James**  
Newsletter  
Technology Contact

**Olive Hall & Jolene Lemaire**  
Historians

**Clara Graham**  
Foundation Representative

**Beulah Thompson**  
Community Volunteer  
Services

**Dana Wasser**  
Member Benefits

**Helen Reynolds**  
Healthy Living

**Linda Fong**  
Memorials, Get-Well, &  
Protective Services

**Rosalie Reese**  
Retirement Education

**Wanda Borne**  
Audit

**Beverly Minaldi**  
Hospitality

# MID-JEFFERSON COUNTY RETIRED SCHOOL PERSONNEL SEPTEMBER 2018 NEWSLETTER



## May Program: Officer Installation

Lynne James, president  
Linda Harrison, first vice president  
Donna Lumpkin, secretary  
Linda Briggs, second vice president  
Loretta Morman, treasurer

- **Next Meeting:** Tuesday, September 11, 2018, @11:30 AM, Bonne Vie, 8595 Memorial Center Blvd., Port Arthur (see attached map)
- **Registration:** 11:00-11:30; **Luncheon:** 11:30
- **Program:** Bill Barnes, TRTA Legislative Coordinator
- **Hosted by:** Beverly Minaldi (chair), Linda Pinner, Gail Krohn, & Mary Sue Carter (volunteers welcome!)

## Let's celebrate together . . .

. . . a message from MJCRSP President Lynne James



Each year our local unit recognizes new retirees from PNGISD and NISD for their years of service and their dedication to our profession. This year our luncheon will be a little different. We are going to be hosted by Bonne Vie, the new care facility near the Medical Center of SE Texas, and they have graciously volunteered to cater the event. At their recent grand opening, MJCRSP members toured the facility and were impressed with the layout, the friendliness of the staff, and the beautiful décor. The dining hall where we will have the luncheon provides a beautiful atmosphere to honor our retirees.

Bill Barnes, our guest speaker, is familiar with Southeast Texas since he spent his undergraduate days at Lamar in Beaumont. As legislative coordinator for TRTA, he will be able to tell us what to expect, the good and the not-so-good, about the upcoming legislative session. Recently the TRS board of directors made an important decision that will affect our retirement fund. Mr. Barnes will probably enlighten us about that also.

Then the fun begins! We will have a special drawing for new retirees who are present at the luncheon and have paid their TRTA dues. Following that, *all* members, present or not, can win one of several fabulous prizes the membership committee will award to those lucky enough to have their names drawn. Our successful membership drive last year gives us the opportunity to reward those who support TRTA's goals and objectives. A brief business meeting will follow this festive even. We hope all of you will be able to attend and join the fun!



In a recent message to retirees through the *Inside Line*, TRTA Executive Director addressed the recent decision of the TRS Board of Trustees to lower their investment rate of return assumption from 8% to 7.25%, a decision that will shape our state's public policy on TRS for years to come. As a result of the board's decision, our pension fund's actuarial soundness will be based on a lower number (7.25% as opposed to 8%), making it more difficult for us to receive a cost of living increase. To offset the effects of the board's decision, the Legislature will need to invest more money into the retirement fund. TRTA is grateful to the TRS Trustees for their long deliberation of this issue, which did not come easy and did not occur without serious thought

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

## May meeting highlights



**Row 1:** Past President Gail Krohn installs the 2018-2019 officers, encouraging them to adopt the leadership qualities of Rudolph, the Red-nosed Reindeer; Tina Bradley, candidate for district judge, encourages members to vote in the run-off election; Linda Pinner, Loretta Morman, and Wanda Borne prepare the refreshments; Linda Harrison gives a glowing report from the membership committee; Tina Bradley and Candye Martin smile for the camera. **Row 2:** Beulah Thompson visits with Linda and Curtis Harrison during refreshment time; Cathy Purgahn and Clara Graham remember their days at PN-G High School; members enjoy visiting before the business meeting begins; Dixie Tucker listens intently to Jessie Howard.

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given to its wide-ranging ramifications. TRTA will direct all its efforts to ensure adequate funding is achieved for the pension fund. **The real focus must now be on our legislative activity.** Members must educate their elected officials and encourage them to do the right thing. Hopefully, the Legislature will work with TRTA and other stakeholders to ensure the fund is appropriately funded and able to meet the actuarial conditions necessary to provide benefit increases. TRS retirees are struggling financially, so every effort must be made to provide a benefit increase to TRS annuitants. Moreover, TRTA will strongly OPPOSE any effort to reduce promised benefits to future TRS retirees as well as any attempt to transition TRS from a traditional defined benefit plan to a privatized defined contribution plan. In addition, TRS-Care needs additional financial support from the Legislature to stabilize the health care plan and reduce out-of-pocket costs to those who depend on it for their health care needs. Our success will depend on TRTA members' ability to communicate with elected officials. Obviously, the next session will present an unparalleled challenge to TRTA and its members. We will need to utilize all our advocacy skills, educational experience, and our never-give-up determination to convince the Legislature to agree to a policy supporting our TRTA members and all education retirees. **NOW IS A TIME FOR ACTION. We must advocate for a sound funding policy that keeps the promise to our active school employees and provides a benefit increase for our current retirees.** For TRTA members, now is the time for education, advocacy, and outreach. Work with your elected officials to improve TRS funding. If you have any doubt about your elected officials' support of TRS and the TRTA agenda, now is the time to ask them. Here are some good questions to ask those running for the Legislature in your area:

- Will you commit to more funding for the TRS pension fund and support a policy that makes the fund solvent and well funded?
- Will you exhaust every opportunity to find a way to pass a benefit increase next session for current TRS retirees?
- Will you support more permanent funding for TRS-Care and help make the program sustainable and affordable?
- Will you oppose changing the TRS defined benefit plan to a 401(k)-style defined contribution plan for ALL current and future TRS retirees?

We can count on TRTA to be our advocate. But, we need all educators, active and retired, to join in these efforts. Our members never quit and never give in. The challenge will be steep and the climb will be tough, but we have fought our way up these hills before, and we must not rest until we reach our goals.

Excerpted from the *Inside Line* by Tim Lee, Executive Director of Texas Retired Teachers Association.

**HELEN'S HEALTH TIP:** The new Medicare cards are being mailed out slowly. Texas cards had not been mailed as of early August 2018. Be patient because it will take longer to mail all the new cards than was first indicated.

# Directions to Bonne Vie



Use one of three highways to reach Medical Center Boulevard:

- **Hwy 69** between Beaumont and Port Arthur
- **Hwy 365** from Fannett area
- **Hwy 73** from Orange, Port Arthur or Mid-County

**Medical Center Boulevard runs between Hwy 365 and Jimmy Johnson Blvd.**

- If you are arriving on **Hwy 365** from the Fannett area, turn right onto Medical Center Blvd. (at Sonic) and then right again at the facility.
- Because of mid-day traffic conditions on **Hwy 365** near its intersection with **Hwy 69**, the best route to the meeting place is by way of **Jimmy Johnson**, which is accessible from either **HWY 347** or **Hwy 69**.
  - From **Beaumont** via **Hwy 69**, take the **Jimmy Johnson** exit and turn right, then right again onto **Medical Center Blvd**. Turn left into the facility off **Medical Center Blvd**.
  - From **Mid-County**, take **Hwy 347** to **Jimmy Johnson**. Then turn right onto **Medical Center Blvd**. and then left into the facility.
  - From **Hwy 73**, take the **Hwy 69** exit toward Beaumont and then left onto **Jimmy Johnson**. Then turn right onto **Medical Center Blvd**. and then left into the facility.
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Directions for parking and entering the facility are on the back. Those who need assistance may park in front of the facility and enter through the front door. Someone from Bonne Vie will then transport you to the Antoine room.

