

## 2022-2023

### OFFICERS & COMMITTEE CHAIRS

**Charles Jehlen**  
President

**Lynne James**  
Immediate Past President  
Yearbook  
Retirement Education  
Technology Contact

**Becky Dungan**  
First Vice President  
Membership

**Cathy Purgahn**  
Second Vice President  
Book Project  
Programs

**Donna Lumpkin**  
Secretary

**Wanda Borne**  
Treasurer

**Dixie Tucker**  
Parliamentarian

**Richard Briggs**  
Legislation

**Gail Krohn**  
Publicity  
Scholarship

**Candy Martin**  
Community Volunteer  
Services

**Helen Reynolds**  
Healthy Living

**Mary Sue Carter**  
Informative  
& Protective Services

**Shelley Dettman**  
Member Benefits

**Clara Graham**  
Foundation  
Representative

**Linda Fong**  
Memorials & Get-Well

**Olive Hall &  
Jolene Lemaire**  
Historians  
Newsletter

**Rosalie Reese**  
Hospitality

**Patricia Allen**  
Social Media

**Loretta Morman**  
Audit

# MID-JEFFERSON COUNTY RETIRED SCHOOL PERSONNEL NEWSLETTER



Next Meeting:

**Tuesday September 13, 2022**

Time: **1:30 pm**

Where:

**Port Neches Public Library  
2025 Merriman, Port Neches**



Guest Speaker

**Sen. Carl Parker**

The focus will be on the  
Constitution of the U. S.

'September being  
Constitution Month'



### A message from **MJCRSP President**



### Charles Jehlen "See You In September!"

My wife and I thank you for your prayers and support during my recent illness. If anyone offers you a free case of pancreatitis, I urge you to just say no. Sheri had the best line of all: While helping me maneuver the IVs and tubes in my hospital room she said, "I think I now qualify for the

**'In Sickness and In Health' Badge!'**

The start of a new school year brings an adrenaline rush to even the most veteran educator. It's a renewal of our spirit, reminding us why we chose public education as a career. Seeing the world through a student's eyes is breathtaking, but as teachers we also bear the heavy responsibility of helping the student grow regardless of their individual situation. Failure is not an option.

As retirees, our obligation is not any less. We support our family members and friends on campus and help them prepare for life after the final bell. I am very proud of what our chapter and our organization accomplished last year. We cannot rest on our laurels, as the mantra "What have you done for me lately?" is endemic in our society.

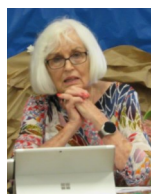
The leadership of MJCRSP has prepared a series of interesting monthly programs for members this year. Most meetings will be held at the Port Neches Library the second Tuesday of each month. Plan to attend to support our efforts.

If you are unable to attend the **MJCRSP** monthly meetings, I urge you to keep tabs on our <http://mjcrsp.org/> **webpage**. Updates on news, legislation, and benefits will keep you current on aspects that affect your retired life.

Keep checking our membership list for retired friends of yours who haven't yet joined. My favorite line of recruitment is "Did you enjoy that 13th check? Would you like to get a COLA?" It gets the prospect's attention quickly. **TRTA** is the **ONLY** group that advocates for TRS annuitants. The more members, the louder our voice in Austin.

I also urge you to get involved in our local activities and committees. Several of our longtime chapter leaders will be stepping down at the end of this year. It's time for new leaders to emerge and build on our momentum. Find an area that interests you and join in. I believe in reducing the unemployment rate of our chapter.

**'If each of us does a little, the job gets done'**



**August 9th  
Executive Committee  
Planning Meeting**





VISIT OUR WEBSITE: [www.mjcrsp.org](http://www.mjcrsp.org) — SEE OUR VIDEO SCRAPBOOK

VISIT OUR FACEBOOK PAGE: [WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/MJCRSP/](http://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/MJCRSP/)



# Don't Forget !

September 5	Monday		<b>Labor Day</b>
September 22	Thursday	<b>First Day of Autumn</b>	
September 29	Thursday	<b>TRTA District 5</b>	<b>Fall Conference</b>
October 11	Tuesday	<b>MJCRSP meeting</b>	<b>Drawing for New Retirees</b>
November 8	Tuesday <b>VOTE</b>	<b>MJCRSP meeting</b>	Speaker <b>Dr. Gonzales</b> <b>PNG Board Room</b>
April 11—12		<b>Day at the Capitol</b>	<b>COLA</b>



- ◆ Tim Lee & Richard Briggs: **VOTE NOVEMBER 8 Election**
  - \* **COLA** (cost of living adjustment) is a major priority for TRS
- ◆ Becky Dungan: **240** Members for 2022—2023
  - ◆ Lynne James: Tim Lee will be speaking at the Fall Conference
    - \* meal \$12
  - ◆ **NO** April meeting because of 'Day at the Capitol'



## Helen's Health Tip

### Respect the Sun

Because **August & September** are **2** of our hottest months, don't forget to protect your skin when you are outside by using sunscreen & staying out of the direct sun

## May Highlights

### SPRING CONFERENCE



## *As the Saying Goes . . . It's Now or Never!*

If you retired in 2004, it will take \$1.46 to buy what you could purchase with \$1.00 when you retired. That is quite a difference when you live on your TRS annuity alone, and have not had a cost of living adjustment since 2004 (or ever). For some explained/unexplained reason, our annuities can be increased under two conditions: the actuarial soundness of the TRS Retirement Fund and the will of the Texas Legislature. In July, TRS Director Brian Guthrie announced that the fund is actuarially sound for 26 years (a figure that changes often) and that in 2021 the fund received a 26% return on investments. That is not the case in 2022, but the fund is still actuarially sound. He and several Texas legislators from both parties who met with TRTA members in July were positive about retirees finally getting a COLA. Why? The fund is sound and the state is flushed with money. However, we have been here before with no results in our favor. Legislative chairs from the 20 TRTA districts across the state were cautioned that during sessions when there is an abundance of money, everyone and his dog want a part of it. Knowing that, we need our message to be louder than that of others seeking more state funding. To that end, TRTA Executive Director Tim Lee has made it his mission to visit as many Fall Conferences in 2022 as he can to rally support for a COLA for retirees. In addition, he encourages all of us who are physically and financially capable to be in Austin on April 12 for the Day at the Capitol. My guess is that no other group can outnumber TRTA members in their quest for financial relief from the state. In addition, Tim Lee will speak to District 5 members on September 29 at the fall conference. Encourage everyone to attend. It's time for us to band together for a common cause—COLA!

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### **District 5 Fall Conference**

Date: September 29, 2019

Where: St Mark's Episcopal Church, 680 Calder, Beaumont

Registration 9:00-9:30am Welcome 9:30 am Speakers 10am-12pm

Lunch 12:00-12:45pm

Business Meeting 12:45-2:00pm

(Lunch \$12—Chicken spaghetti, green beans, salad, tea, dessert)

Contact Wanda Borne by September 15 to register:

409.962.6913; 409.749.4317 or Email at [wborne@gt.tt.com](mailto:wborne@gt.tt.com)

\$12 may be paid at the conference—last day to cancel is September 26

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### **FACTS**

- ◆ Retirees since 2004 have never had a cost of living increase.
- ◆ For most retirees, their TRS annuity is their only source of income.
  - ◆ The TRS retirement fund is actuarially sound.
  - ◆ The state has plenty money to share!

### **FUTURE**

- If we do not get a COLA in 2023, then when?
- New legislators probably know nothing about TRS retirees' needs.
  - It is up to us to educate them!
  - Be at the Capitol on April 12, 2023!!!

(See next page for the Day at the Capitol planning schedule.)

## Planning for Day at the Capitol 2023

Retirees who attend the Day at the Capitol in Austin on April 12, 2023, will flood the House and Senate galleries in their traditional RED attire to rally the Texas Legislature to provide a long-awaited COLA for TRS retirees. Visits to the offices of senators and representatives will be scheduled during the day. An ice cream social on the grounds of the Capitol will take place in the afternoon. Some activities are being planned for the evening before the rally at the Hilton in downtown Austin. Details will be announced later. Rooms have been set aside for retirees to stay at the Hilton on the evening of April 11. Reservations will be available by September 1. Most travelers to Austin will make the trip on Tuesday, April 11.

Considering how important it is to make our presence known, districts and chapters throughout the state are already making plans to be in Austin for the rally. District 5, as well as some chapters in District 5, have funds available to make the trip by bus. In order to make those plans, we need information from all District 5 TRTA members who are considering making the trip. **Please fill in the questionnaire below and return it to your CHAPTER PRESIDENT before the end of October. Note: This questionnaire is for planning only; it is not a binding agreement.**

### April 2023 Rally at the Capitol Planning

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Chapter \_\_\_\_\_ Contact \_\_\_\_\_

Yes      No      Undecided (Please check the blank yes, no, or undecided)

\_\_\_\_\_      \_\_\_\_\_      \_\_\_\_\_ I plan to go to the Capitol for the April 12 Rally.

\_\_\_\_\_      \_\_\_\_\_      \_\_\_\_\_ I plan to go to the Capitol for the rally on April 12 *only*.

\_\_\_\_\_      \_\_\_\_\_      \_\_\_\_\_ I plan to go to the Capitol on April 11 *and* 12.

\_\_\_\_\_      \_\_\_\_\_      \_\_\_\_\_ I plan to provide my own transportation.

\_\_\_\_\_      \_\_\_\_\_      \_\_\_\_\_ I would be interested in traveling by bus to Austin .

\_\_\_\_\_      \_\_\_\_\_      \_\_\_\_\_ If I travel by bus, I am willing to pay for my lodging on the night of April 11 and return home on April 12, knowing that I am also responsible for my meals to and from Austin.

\_\_\_\_\_      \_\_\_\_\_      \_\_\_\_\_ If I travel by bus I prefer to leave for Austin (very) early on the morning of April 12 and will be responsible for my meals to and from Austin.



88TH LEGISLATIVE SESSION

GREAT VICTORIES  
GREAT FUTURE

# TRTA LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES



**Why you need this information:** The Texas Retired Teachers Association (TRTA) and its members actively communicate with those who care about Texas public education retirees and with candidates running for political office during the 2022 election cycle. This document offers insight about items Teacher Retirement System of Texas (TRS) retirees are hoping will be addressed during the 88<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session that begins in January 2023.

**TRTA Purpose and Mission:** The Texas Retired Teachers Association (TRTA) works closely with the Texas Legislature and U.S. Congress to preserve and maintain the Teacher Retirement System (TRS) pension fund and TRS-Care insurance plan for all Texas educators. Together, we protect, promote, and defend the interests of TRS members.

## TRTA STATE ISSUES

**Support a COLA for TRS Retirees:** *TRTA urges the enactment of a substantial and meaningful cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for TRS retirees as a priority item in the coming session. TRTA is aware of the sincere interest expressed by the Legislature over the past several years to take steps regarding the significant loss of income retirees are experiencing due to inflation. The last COLA awarded to retirees in 2013 benefitted only those who retired prior to September 2004. TRTA welcomes the open expression of support from legislators to address this issue during the 88th Texas Legislative Session.*

**Preserve TRS Texas Traditional Defined Benefit Retirement Plan:** TRTA's primary public policy objective is the preservation of the TRS traditional defined benefit plan for all public-school retirees and pre-retirees. TRS proves that when these plans are managed and funded appropriately, they provide cost-efficient retirement security for plan participants and taxpayers alike. Please note that 95% of public-school employees do not participate in Social Security. This saves Texas taxpayers billions of dollars, but also raises the stakes when ensuring the TRS traditional defined benefit plan remains strong and viable for all future retirees.

**Fund TRS Pension Trust:** In 2019, TRTA championed the "TRS Actuarial Soundness—Raise the Base!" plan (Senate Bill 12). This plan is a multi-session increased funding initiative that will ensure the long-term solvency of TRS. TRTA members urge the 88th Texas Legislature to continue the plan by introducing and adopting a state budget that funds contribution rates of 8.25% for the state and active educators and 1.9% for school districts by 2024.

**Protect TRS-Care:** TRTA appreciates the work of the Legislature to address increasing health care costs for TRS retirees over the past several years. However, it is our belief that the best solution for this issue is to design and implement a long-term plan that continuously reviews health care costs and associated state funding and compares them to the actual costs of health care. This solution would take the place of the current arbitrary formula that was established 35 years ago when TRS-Care was created.

TRTA's position on federal legislative priorities may be found on another document. Please contact [info@trta.org](mailto:info@trta.org) for more information.



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