



# (Ohio Retired Teachers Association)

The following was sent to ORTA members on January 12, 2023

**ORTA (Ohio Retirement for Teachers Association), MOF (Ohio STRS Members Only Forum) and the STRS Ohio Watchdogs formally announce the endorsement for Pat Davidson, Berea School District. **THIS IS FOR AN ACTIVE TEACHER POSITION ON THE BOARD!****

Three informed and reform minded candidates were interviewed including Rob Gilbert and Michelle Flanigan. In short, the interview committee was tasked with endorsing only one of three outstanding articulate candidates. The committee's focus was simple and direct.

STRS leadership has led active teachers down a path where they are paying more and working longer for less, while many retired teachers are facing financial hardships due to COLA loss. Trustees who continue to allow this to happen and resist change need to be replaced by individuals like Pat Davidson, Rob Gilbert, and Michelle Flanigan.

The STRS Board Election occurs in April and ends May 1st. More information on Pat Davidson and how to vote will be forthcoming.



## *Quick Bio*

### **Pat Davidson**

Business & Computer teacher for the past 22 years in the Berea City School District in Northeast Ohio.

Pat teaches his students personal finance every day to his students.

Pat is reform minded and wants change to achieve stronger pensions for all active and retired teachers.

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### **I have three simple goals as your next STRS Board member:**

1. Reduce the years of service to be eligible for retirement.
2. Restore a COLA that will allow benefits to keep pace with inflation.
3. Encourage STRS to increase transparency for members.

**PLEASE PASS THIS INFORMATION ON TO ACTIVE TEACHERS WHO WILL BE VOTING FOR THIS POSITION!**

**Keep up on the latest STRS information on Facebook by joining these groups:**

**Ohio STRS Member Only Forum**

**STRS Ohio Watchdogs**

# ACRTA BOOK PROJECT

## *Memories from the Schoolhouse!*



### *Memories from the Schoolhouse!*

*A collection of nearly 40 stories  
from our time in the classroom.*

A project by members of the  
Allen County (OH)  
Retired Teachers Association

Book sales are going well! Copies may be purchased at both Readmore Book stores, Brunner News Agency, ArtSpace/Lima, The Allen County Museum, and Educational Providers (Ed Pro, Inc.) Copies may also be purchased from Amazon. The book is available for download on KINDLE (and is a free download if you have KINDLE UNLIMITED!)

Other good news is that a second book is planned! Please send your memories to David Reedy at [davidreedy99@gmail.com](mailto:davidreedy99@gmail.com).

If you don't have email, you may submit them to Norma or Melinda King. We will happily type them and email them to David. Stories may be submitted with your name or anonymously. If you submit under your name, please send a short bio also.

**Please submit your stories to [davidreedy99@gmail.com](mailto:davidreedy99@gmail.com).** Also e-mail him with any questions.

## 2023 ACRTA Meeting Dates

General Membership Meetings -Lunch at 11:30 a.m. followed by program/meeting

\*February 2    **\*April 6 or 13**    \*June 1    \*August 3    \*October 5    \*December 7

*The April meeting (first Thursday) falls during Holy Week on Maundy Thursday. It is possible the church may have services that day. We have two options: move the meeting to a different location or move the meeting to the following Thursday. We will discuss this at the February luncheon.*

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Board Meetings - 1:00 p.m.

\*January 5    \*March 2    \*May 4    \*July 6    \*September 7    \*November 2

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~~~~~ Quote to ponder ~~~~~

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”  
— Nelson Mandela



This was our second year entering a tree in the Allen County Museum Christmas Tree Festival. A big thank you to Melinda King, Rose Phillips, Mary Jordan, Lee and Doris Stockhaus, and Sally Windle for working on decorations and putting up the tree to represent ACRTA at the Allen County Museum Christmas Tree Festival. They did a wonderful job of taking educational items and decorating the tree. Dave Reedy also created special "ornaments" to advertise our book which was on sale at the museum.

# Happy Birthday!

## February

Thomas Selis - 1st

Meg Rockhold - 9<sup>th</sup>

Mary Stepleton - 12<sup>th</sup>

Kathy Hadding - 15<sup>th</sup>

Josie Montano - 19<sup>th</sup>

Joseph Bonifas - 4<sup>th</sup>

Darlene Goetz - 10<sup>th</sup>

Martha Warden - 12<sup>th</sup>

Phyllis Koch - 16<sup>th</sup>

Jim Cooper - 21<sup>st</sup>

Michelle Sanders - 5<sup>th</sup>

Judith Hagaman - 10<sup>th</sup>

Maureen Wiesenbahn - 14<sup>th</sup>

Margaret Ballentine - 17<sup>th</sup>

Missy Bennett - 28<sup>th</sup>

## March

Rose Phillips - 1st

E. Ramona Emerick - 4<sup>th</sup>

Kathy Earl - 9<sup>th</sup>

Paula Langhals - 11<sup>th</sup>

Pam Laules - 17<sup>th</sup>

Paula Shrader - 21<sup>st</sup>

Deb Washam - 28<sup>th</sup>

Leah Sanderson - 1<sup>st</sup>

John Fallon - 4<sup>th</sup>

Corwin Croy - 10<sup>th</sup>

Linda Holman - 12<sup>th</sup>

Susan Hubble - 20<sup>th</sup>

Carol Darbyshire - 26<sup>th</sup>

Jennifer Stepleton - 30<sup>th</sup>

Linda Lamb - 2<sup>nd</sup>

Shelby Cluts - 9<sup>th</sup>

George Garber - 10<sup>th</sup>

Phyllis Fell - 14<sup>th</sup>

Ronald Hagaman - 21<sup>st</sup>

Irene Cooper - 27<sup>th</sup>

\*\*If we have missed you or have incorrect information, please contact us so that we can update our records.

Message from the President ~

**Happy 2023!**

Thank you all for giving me the privilege of serving as ACRTA president for the next two years. This is a HUGE opportunity, and I will do my best to live up to the superior jobs of the past presidents -- with special gratitude to Barb Hochstetler for all her assistance in making this a smooth transition. **She is a tough act to follow!**

One of our most important goals must be to continue to support ORTA and all those who are working to protect the STRS funds. There is still much to do, but with the recent forensic audit report, increased attendance at the board meetings, media exposure, and creation of online informative groups, the word is being spread and folks are paying attention! Please continue to make your fellow retirees **and active teachers** aware of the mismanagement that has continued for many years. The louder our voices become, the better chance this squandering of our retirement money will end! We will continue to keep you updated on STRS board activities. We have many savvy members who are "in the know." Please check out the STRS Watchdog and STRS Members Only groups on Facebook. News hits those two sites as soon as it happens!

I also encourage you to support our Dr. John Rockhold Teacher Grant Fund. The money we give to these classroom teachers is used for some amazing special projects and lessons. If you haven't attended the luncheon to see what fantastic things these teachers are doing in their classrooms, please be sure to attend the June meeting. The \$2 from your dues, raffle ticket money, and other donations to the fund have generated some special experiences for hundreds of students each year. ***Proceeds from our very own published book are also supporting this project!***

Finally, I want to encourage you to become active in ACRTA. Last year we had over 200 members, but our luncheons typically brought out only between 25 to 30 members! I would love to see a full house! Our board works hard to provide programs that entertain, educate, and interest! Cheryl and Kathy had done a wonderful job scheduling speakers and getting us back into the swing after two years of COVID quarantine. The members of Immanuel United Methodist church in Elida continue to offer us delicious lunches in comfortable surroundings. They are very accommodating, and we truly appreciate their hard work! If you can't attend the luncheon, there are other ways to become engaged - just ask!

I wish you all a happy and successful 2023! We deserve a year with little strife and lots of fun! Here's hoping we can get back to the job of enjoying retirement!

Norma

**Legislative News from Bruce Hodges – Legislative Chair**

A note from Bruce: Pay attention to your legislators and what is happening in your government (US, state and local!) The world is changing fast, and you don't want to be caught unaware!

## Board of Directors/Officers and Committees for 2023

| <u>Office</u>                          | <u>Phone #</u> | <u>E-mail</u>                                                              |
|----------------------------------------|----------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b><u>President</u></b>                |                |                                                                            |
| Penn, Norma                            | 419-303-8431   | <a href="mailto:nleigh27catz@aol.com">nleigh27catz@aol.com</a>             |
| <b><u>Past President</u></b>           |                |                                                                            |
| Hochstetler, Barbara                   | 419-303-5667   | <a href="mailto:bhochstetler001@woh.rr.com">bhochstetler001@woh.rr.com</a> |
| <b><u>Vice Presidents</u></b>          |                |                                                                            |
| Quay, Cheryl                           | 419-991-4886   | <a href="mailto:cdquay@wcoil.com">cdquay@wcoil.com</a>                     |
| Dixon, Kathy                           | 419-233-0952   | <a href="mailto:kathy.r.dixon@gmail.com">kathy.r.dixon@gmail.com</a>       |
| <b><u>Secretary</u></b>                |                |                                                                            |
| Baumgarte, Carol                       | 419-692-2552   | <a href="mailto:13baumgarte@gmail.com">13baumgarte@gmail.com</a>           |
| <b><u>Treasurer</u></b>                |                |                                                                            |
| Cramer, Sue                            | 419-581-1304   | <a href="mailto:scramer@toast.net">scramer@toast.net</a>                   |
| <b><u>Membership</u></b>               |                |                                                                            |
| King, Melinda                          | 567-204-7952   | <a href="mailto:4300royalty@gmail.com">4300royalty@gmail.com</a>           |
| <b><u>Teacher Grant</u></b>            |                |                                                                            |
| Kohlhorst, Jerri                       | 419-991-2838   | <a href="mailto:jerrico47@hotmail.com">jerrico47@hotmail.com</a>           |
| Schwabero, Mila                        | 567-204-8846   | <a href="mailto:ischwabero@woh.rr.com">ischwabero@woh.rr.com</a>           |
| <b><u>Legislative &amp; ORTA</u></b>   |                |                                                                            |
| Hodges, Bruce                          | 419-228-9753   | <a href="mailto:blhodges@woh.rr.com">blhodges@woh.rr.com</a>               |
| <b><u>Wellness</u></b>                 |                |                                                                            |
| Urish, Jane                            | 419-991-3966   | <a href="mailto:urishjo@email.com">urishjo@email.com</a>                   |
| <b><u>News &amp; Muse Editor</u></b>   |                |                                                                            |
| Penn, Norma                            | 419-303-8431   | <a href="mailto:nleigh27catz@aol.com">nleigh27catz@aol.com</a>             |
| <b><u>Memorial Service</u></b>         |                |                                                                            |
| Phillips, Rose                         | 419-228-4328   |                                                                            |
| Quay, Cheryl                           | 419-991-4886   | <a href="mailto:cdquay@wcoil.com">cdquay@wcoil.com</a>                     |
| <b><u>Health Insurance Advisor</u></b> |                |                                                                            |
| Bos, John                              | 419-234-0646   | <a href="mailto:jojolima@wcoil.com">jojolima@wcoil.com</a>                 |
| <b><u>Nominations</u></b>              |                |                                                                            |
| OPEN                                   |                |                                                                            |
| <b><u>Public Relations</u></b>         |                |                                                                            |
| Hodges, Bruce                          | 419-228-9753   | <a href="mailto:blhodges@woh.rr.com">blhodges@woh.rr.com</a>               |

## THIS JUST IN!

As reported by *The Toledo Blade*, there is a sudden vacancy on the STRS board as one of the anti-reform members just submitted his resignation from the eleven-member board.

**State Treasurer Robert Sprague will be making a new appointment to the board at any moment.**

Please join ORTA in encouraging Treasurer Sprague to appoint a board member who will join the five existing pro-reform members to fight for transparency and accountability.

Pro-reform board members are saying “NO MORE” to STRS accounting gimmicks, lack of transparency, misreporting of investment performance and unconscionable staff bonuses.

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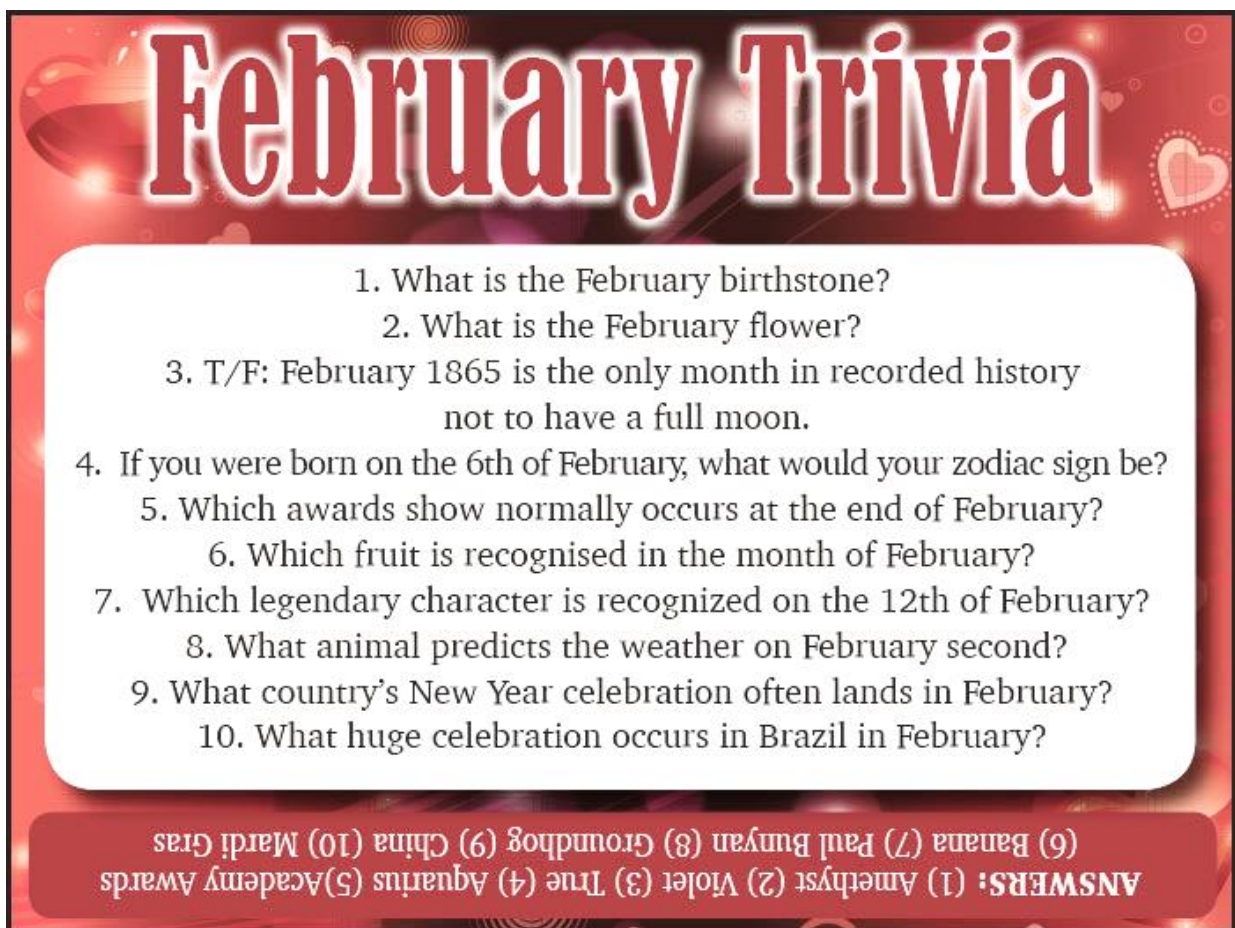
Treasurer Sprague needs to hear how STRS mismanagement has resulted in lost COLA's and broken promises for retired teachers. He needs to hear how active teachers are being forced to pay more and work longer for less benefits.

He needs to know new leadership is needed at STRS.

Join us in calling the Treasurer's office at 614-466-2160 and emailing [constituentaffairs@tos.ohio.gov](mailto:constituentaffairs@tos.ohio.gov) to speak your mind.

Together we are making a difference

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**February Trivia**

1. What is the February birthstone?
2. What is the February flower?
3. T/F: February 1865 is the only month in recorded history not to have a full moon.
4. If you were born on the 6th of February, what would your zodiac sign be?
5. Which awards show normally occurs at the end of February?
6. Which fruit is recognised in the month of February?
7. Which legendary character is recognized on the 12th of February?
8. What animal predicts the weather on February second?
9. What country's New Year celebration often lands in February?
10. What huge celebration occurs in Brazil in February?

**ANSWERS:** (1) Amethyst (2) Violet (3) True (4) Aquarius (5) Academy Awards (6) Banana (7) Paul Bunyan (8) Groundhog (9) China (10) Mardi Gras

ACRTA General Meeting

December 1, 2022 11:30

Primrose Retirement Center

Secretary's Report: Melinda King: Filed as printed.

Treasurer's Report: Sue Cramer: We have a balance of \$7,218.83 . We have \$825.69 in the teacher grant funds. The 2023 budget was presented and Mila Schwabero moved to accept the budget. William Peebles seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Filed for audit.

Membership: Norma Penn: We have 33 members for 2023.

ORTA: ORTA is working on membership growth and COLA. ORTA has launched a suit against STRS to reveal the investments of the STRS money. If we win the lawsuit for illegal investments, we can sue for back pay of lost COLA's. ORTA will begin screening candidates for the STRS active teacher representative election next spring. We need to influence the active teacher votes. We need one more board member who would be willing to change the way things are run at STRS.

Teacher Grants: We were able to award 13 grants between 14 teachers. We had an anonymous donation of \$2000 so we were able to award \$3177.46 this year. 89 grants have been given to date for a total of \$17,486.85.

Legislative: The legislative boundaries are still in dispute. The League of Women's Voters has filed a suit with the US Supreme Court.

Membership Health: Ross Bowers, Ed Hearne and Dave Lytle have passed away.

Old Business: Our book, *Memories from the Schoolhouse*, is available for sale. Please promote its sale. Thank you to Norma Penn, Mary Jordan, Lee Stockhaus, and Rose Phillips for decorating the Christmas tree at the Allen County Museum. Mila Schwabero moved to accept the up-dated by-laws. Ed Hoffmeyer seconded the motion. Motion carried.

New Business: Plaques were awarded to Secretary, Melinda King and President, Barb Hochstetler for their service for the last four years. Norma Penn was installed as president. Carol Baumgarte was installed as secretary. Cheryl Quay was also installed as vice-president due to not being able to be officially installed last year. Barb Hochstetler passed the engraved school bell to Norma Penn to begin her presidency for the chapter.

Raffle winner of the Christmas ornament and Encore tickets was Melinda King. The winner of a free meal was Ed Hoffmeyer. We raised \$95 for the teacher grants.

Next meeting Thursday, February 3, 2023, 11:30 at Elida Immanuel United Methodist Church. Meeting adjourned at 1:35.

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Visit our ACRTA website on the ORTA webpage at [orta.org](http://orta.org). Click on the Our Regions & Chapters tab at the top. Then click on the Northwest Region. Scroll down and click on Allen.

On the home page you will find the white box with three lines. Click on that to see the menu of pages. From there you can go to our meeting dates, officers and chairpersons, membership form, teacher grant information, grant applications, and past newsletters and information about our book [MEMORIES FROM THE SCHOOLHOUSE](#).

Contact Barb Hochstetler, [bhochstetler001@woh.rr.com](mailto:bhochstetler001@woh.rr.com), if you would like to see other information on the ACRTA site. Give it a visit and give your feedback.





# 2023 ALLEN COUNTY RETIRED TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Jan. 1, 2023 to Dec. 31, 2023

**ACRTA Dues: \$12.00**

ACRTA \$12.00 \_\_\_\_\_ ORTA \$30.00 \_\_\_\_\_ GRANT DONATION (optional) \_\_\_\_\_  
New \_\_\_\_\_ Former \_\_\_\_\_ Continuing \_\_\_\_\_  
Date paid \_\_\_\_\_ Cash \_\_\_\_\_ Check # \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Birthday (mo) \_\_\_\_\_ (day) \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete this form and return with  
Cash/check **WRITTEN TO ACRTA.**

Send to: Melinda King

4300 Alix Dr. Elida, OH 45807

419-339-6993 or 567-204-7952

4300 [royalty@gmail.com](mailto:royalty@gmail.com)

## Welcome to the ACRTA!

**Please share a copy with your spouse, another retiree, or any person interested in ACRTA.**

Associate membership shall be open to any active teacher or other person interested in the work of this Association and approved by the Board of Directors. An associate member shall have membership rights and privileges, except the right to vote, hold office or to represent the Association.