



RETIREMENT FOR TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

As reported in the last newsletter, ORTA has changed its name to OHIO RETIREMENT FOR TEACHERS ASSOCIATION but will still be known as ORTA. The change is an effort to be more inclusive with respect to Active (contributing) teachers. ORTA would love to welcome active teachers into membership. Please encourage actives to join this association which has been vigilant in watching out for our STRS benefits and supporting those who support us!

Congratulations to Pat Davidson on his election to the STRS Board!

Pat defeated his opponent with an over 3-1 margin by active teachers! Thanks to all the retirees and actives who got the word out.

On a less positive note . . . On May 5, Gov. Mike DeWine attempted to illegally remove Wade Steen from the STRS board on the eve of Pat Davidson’s election victory. Wade is fighting to stay on the board to protect teachers. Wade has been a consistent voice in questioning board activity and working to protect our pension fund. We need everyone to take action to get Gov. DeWine to follow the law and respect the votes of teachers. Please write or email the Governor with your concern.

If you use FACEBOOK, please consider joining the STRS Ohio Watchdog page, The STRS Members Only Forum, and the ACRTA Facebook page. All three will keep you up to date on the latest STRS news.

The following is being shared by Bruce Hodges. You may have received his email.

ORTA Liaison Update May 17, 2023

Greetings ORTA Liaisons!

1. Congrats to all ORTA members and our partners at STRS Members Only Forum, STRS Watchdogs, and Ohio Federation of Teachers on selecting the winning candidate in the election this spring of STRS Pat Davidson. Pat won the election with over 20,000 votes to incumbent Arthur Lard’s total of 8,000 votes. By a 3-1 margin the ‘reform minded’ candidate was selected over the status quo candidate... Again. This marks the fifth time in a row that the people have spoken. Change is coming to STRS. Unfortunately, the governor (DeWine) has intervened on behalf of STRS’s management team and moved to replace one of the reform board members (Wade Steen) on the board to keep the current STRS management team in place. Several important things to keep in mind with DeWine’s attempt to replace Steen:

- a. Mr. DeWine’s move is illegal. The law is clear that Mr. Steen does not ‘serve at the pleasure’ of the governor. He is appointed for a term and remains in that position until he serves his term. Again, the law is clear that DeWine does not have the authority to do what he is attempting to do.
- b. Mr. DeWine was obviously influenced by STRS management to replace Steen. Why??? Perhaps it’s because DeWine is influenced by a lobbyist Leah Pappas? This is the same lobbyist that worked for 1st Energy and the corruption associated with former speaker Householder and DeWine. She has also worked with/for STRS. The trail of corruption connects Householder, DeWine and STRS. Not hard to imagine when you consider the amount of money that is available to influence politics in Ohio. Wall St. has access to over \$20 billion from STRS.
- c. Mr. Steen is fighting his removal through legal means, and I am optimistic that his position will prevail.

Related to Wade Steen’s legal fight ORTA’s Executive Committee decided that it is a good time to start a ‘Pension Defense Fund’. This fund would collect donations from ORTA members and other interested parties to help in fighting for ORTA’s mission. This fund would allow ORTA to offer financial assistance to entities that would further ORTA’s mission associated with advocacy. The description of the fund is listed below:

Pension Defense Fund Policy

ORTA hereby establishes a Pension Defense Fund (“Fund”) for the purpose of furthering ORTA’s mission of protecting the pensions of Ohio teachers. ORTA may solicit contributions into the Fund and shall restrict contributions received in the Fund for related uses. The Executive Director may make expenditures from the Fund upon written approval of the Executive Committee. The Executive Director is authorized to transfer unrestricted monies into the Fund and may then transfer money out of the Fund to reimburse for such transfers.

The Pension Defense Fund will be a separate account from our operating account and detailed records of all donations will be maintained (like the Forensic Audit Account). Donations are being collected currently. A rubric is being developed that will be used to evaluate requests from this fund.

- 2. The ORTA newsletter is scheduled to be delivered by week’s end.
- 3. Thank you for all you do on behalf of SRS members!

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The next Luncheon will spotlight several of our Grant Recipients.

Below is a summary from one of our recipients who teaches in the Bath district.

The grant money was used to purchase five Wonderbooks for my classroom. Wonderbooks are a read-along audiobook that contains a device on the inside cover that the reader controls. The books have helped my students with vocabulary development, phonic skills, and comprehension. Thank you for helping my students become better readers.

Thank you, Stephani Fortman, 7th Grade Intervention Specialist

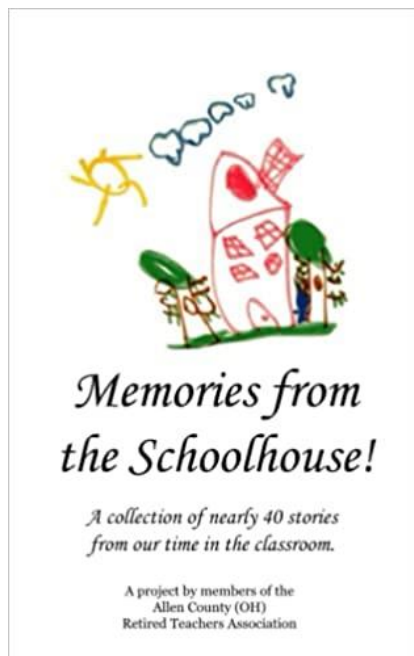
We will continue to share stories from other recipients throughout the coming months. Spread the word that grants will be available in a few months for the next school year. Teachers and administrators should be on the lookout for applications right after LABOR DAY.

A continued request! Get those stories in to David as soon as possible.

I know you all have a few to share! (Active teachers may share also.)

ACRTA BOOK PROJECT

Memories from the Schoolhouse!



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.

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. Also e-mail Dave with any questions.

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# **2023 ACRTA Meeting Dates**

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

June 1    August 3    October 5    December 7

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Board Meetings - 1:00 p.m.

\*July 6    \*September 7    \*November 2

~~~~~ Quotation to Ponder ~~~~~

"Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire." — W. B. Yeats

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

JUNE

| | | |
|------------|-------------|----|
| Wendell | Badertscher | 1 |
| Patricia | Rockers | 2 |
| Joan Carey | Pedlow | 4 |
| Thomas | Stout | 6 |
| Deborah | Boedicker | 8 |
| Dennis | Scheidler | 13 |
| Judith | Gephart | 15 |
| Judy | Chaffins | 16 |
| David | Hochstetler | 17 |
| Lee | Stockhaus | 21 |
| Ted | Savidge | 22 |
| June | Orr | 23 |
| Carol | Hearne | 24 |
| David | Reedy | 24 |
| Dennis | Spragg | 24 |
| Ethel | Nelson | 30 |

JULY

| | | |
|--------------|-------------|----|
| Sarah | Arnett | 1 |
| Edward | Hoffmeyer | 3 |
| Deb | Pauff | 6 |
| Oscar | Marshall | 10 |
| Joanne | Guy | 12 |
| Patrice | Keating | 15 |
| Elizabeth A. | Eley | 22 |
| Dianne | Carter | 25 |
| Judith | Kent | 26 |
| John | Mason | 27 |
| Marylin | Morningstar | 27 |
| Lana | Gerber | 30 |
| Kathleen | Dixon | 31 |

If we missed your birthday or have the wrong date, please contact Norma or Melinda.

Message from the President

After two months of windy days, calm days, rainy days, dry days, warm days, and cold days, I think we may all be looking forward to summer. I hope you have some exciting vacation plans or just plain restful days scheduled and you have an opportunity to enjoy some sunshine. If you plan on doing something different or fun this year, please share it with us for the August-September *News and Muse*. I would love to see what members have been doing to amuse themselves. Send me your pictures, stories, or just a short anecdote. I will print what I receive!

Thank you to all who got the word out about the STRS candidate Pat Davidson. As you can see from the ORTA page, the campaign was successful, and we look forward to his presence on the STRS board. He has pledged to work for the good of the active and retired teachers and be one more watchdog over our retirement funds.

This month's luncheon program will feature several of our grant recipients. It is always interesting to see the creative ways these teachers use the grant award and the impact it has within their classrooms. Please plan to attend so you, too, can see how the grant benefits the students and gives the teachers a chance to motivate and inspire. We all know how much teachers spend from their own pockets, so the grant dollars are a big boost and greatly appreciated. We will also spotlight some recipients who cannot attend on both our FACEBOOK page and in upcoming *News and Muse*. *A colossal THANK YOU to Jerri Kohlhorst who took over this project a few years ago and has done a superior job of contacting the schools, organizing the grants, and notifying the winners.*

Please invite any retired teachers you know to join us. Each fall we send out several hundred membership letters, but we may miss a few folks here and there. Remember that it isn't necessary that they be retired from an Allen County School as long as they are under the STRS umbrella. Spouses and other interested individuals are also eligible to join as non-voting members. Let's increase our numbers!

This month's luncheon will be our TACO BAR meal. The ladies at Immanuel Methodist do a wonderful job feeding us and this is always a special treat. I am looking forward to the "Surprise" dessert. They never fail to please!

Last year we had a "field trip" luncheon at the Allen County Museum and a couple of years ago we shared a picnic luncheon at The Metro Park. We have another outing planned for an upcoming meeting. There will be more information on that *at a later date*, but we think you will enjoy what we have scheduled.

A BIG THANK YOU to Cheryl Quay and Rose Phillips for again leading us in a solemn and beautiful Memorial Service. We have lost a number of educators this past year, so it was appropriate and an honor to remember them with such a lovely ceremony.

I look forward to seeing you all in June!

Norma

STRS NEWS

Below is an editorial printed in the Toledo Blade on May 16.

(Since this was posted on the STRS Members only Forum on Facebook, *my fingers are crossed that I am not breaking any copyright laws!* I think it very clearly explains the issues STRS has been facing.)

Published: May 16, 2023

Focus on performance

THE BLADE EDITORIAL BOARD

Ohio's Retirement Study Council is supposed to safeguard the retirement assets of the state's five public pension funds.

Close observation over an extended period leaves us with little confidence they are up to the job.

It's a critical job. Ohio's pensions hold over \$250 billion for more than 2 million public workers who are currently paying, formerly paid, or are collecting retirement benefits. Because Ohio public workers do not pay Social Security, the state system is all they can count on for retirement income.

On Thursday, the ORSC questioned State Teachers Retirement System leadership on the highly controversial plan to pay performance incentive bonuses totaling more than \$11 million to investment staff.

Multiple members, including Sen. Paula Hicks Hudson (D., Toledo), prefaced their questions with admissions of ignorance on investment management. Ideally, such an important oversight body would appoint members with some degree of expertise.

But it takes no expertise whatsoever to understand the key fact on STRS.

State Auditor Keith Faber's special investigation of STRS featured an easy to understand performance chart.

Since 2009 STRS has underperformed the results of an S&P 500 index by \$90 billion. Incredibly, Ohio is paying STRS staff performance bonuses when they have demonstrably destroyed value.

If STRS had no investment staff and put the entire portfolio into an index it would literally have doubled the money it has now, according to Mr. Faber. STRS would also have paid a fraction of the fees they do now.

There is no better illustration of ORSC incompetence than discussion without resolution on \$11 million in bonuses, while ignoring \$90 billion in unrealized investment gains.

STRS has a \$20 billion liability, has frozen cost-of-living-adjustments since 2017 and is pushing legislation to increase the amount school districts — taxpayers — contribute to the pension.

Meanwhile, the report that shows STRS could have a \$70 billion surplus has prompted no action by the General Assembly or the governor.

Financially, \$11 million is inconsequential to STRS. The bonuses are important only as an indicator of self-serving mismanagement, made possible through the abdication of responsibility by the legislative and executive branches of Ohio government.

Ninety billion dollars should be impossible to ignore for even the most naïve Ohio legislator. Fifty percent of possible performance is also simple to understand. Fees of pennies on the dollars now spent are also uncomplicated.

If the Ohio Retirement Study Council does not act upon this information, who will?

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During a Memorial Day weekend, four veterans, Allan, Bill, Carl and Dan, had their reunion. They exchanged stories about their previous missions in the Navy. Each of them has served on two different types of naval vessels. The two who served on an aircraft carrier together never served on the submarine the other two served together. The two who served on a destroyer together never served on the cruiser the other two served together. Carl and Dan had served on the same ship together. After Allan and Bill served on the same ship together, Allan and Dan served on another ship together. Allan never served on a destroyer. Carl and Bill never served on an aircraft carrier.

Based on the information above, fill in the following blanks:

Allan had served on a _____ and a _____.

Bill had served on a _____ and a _____.

Carl had served on a _____ and a _____.

Dan had served on a _____ and a _____.

(solution on the next page)

B
R
A
I
N
G
A
M
E
S

Memorial Day Word Scramble Puzzle

1. AIALTMR
2. RVBSOEE
3. VEBAR
4. TOTCRPIIA
5. OOMMMCTEERA
6. ROMDFEE
7. TAEHWR
8. LRDIESO
9. ONTCYUR
10. ORELMMIA
11. OVOUSRITIC
12. UEDNTI
13. TONAALNI
14. RDEAAP
15. ARFIIECSS

Solutions

From the final statement *"Carl and Bill never served on an aircraft carrier"* and the statement *"The two who served on an aircraft carrier together never served on the submarine the other two served together"*, we can conclude that Carl and Bill has served on an submarine while the *other two* Allan and Dan served on a aircraft carrier.

The other remaining type of ships are destroyer and cruiser. We also know that *"Allan and Bill served on the same ship together"* which may either be the destroyer or the submarine. Since *"Allan never served on a destroyer"* Allan and Bill must have served on a cruiser together. From the statement *"The two who served on a destroyer together never served on the cruiser the other two served together"*, we conclude that the *other two*, Carl and Dan, served on a destroyer.

Therefore to summarize:

Allan had served on a aircraft carrier and a cruiser.
 Bill had served on a submarine and a cruiser.
 Carl had served on a submarine and a destroyer.
 Dan had served on a aircraft carrier and a destroyer.

Memorial Day Word Scramble Puzzle Answer Key

| | |
|----------------|-------------|
| 1. AIALTMR | MARTIAL |
| 2. RVBSOEE | OBSERVE |
| 3. VEBAR | BRAVE |
| 4. TOTCRPIIA | PATRIOTIC |
| 5. OOMMMCTEERA | COMMEMORATE |
| 6. ROMDFEE | FREEDOM |
| 7. TAEHWR | WREATH |
| 8. LRDIESO | SOLDIER |
| 9. ONTCYUR | COUNTRY |
| 10. ORELMMA | MEMORIAL |
| 11. OVOUSRITIC | VICTORIOUS |
| 12. UEDNTI | UNITED |
| 13. TONAALNI | NATIONAL |
| 14. RDEAAP | PARADE |
| 15. ARFIECCS | SACRIFICE |

1. C 2. C 3. B 4. D 5. A
 6. B 7. C 8. A 9. B 10. D

Trivia Answers

Memorial Day Trivia

1. What year was the first official celebration of Memorial Day? A. 1861 B. 1864 C. 1868 D. 1865
2. What was the longest war in which U.S. soldiers fought? A. Vietnam War B. Civil War C. War in Afghanistan D. War in Iraq
3. Memorial Day is traditionally viewed as the start of which season? A. Spring B. Summer C. Fall D. Winter
4. What was Memorial Day's original name? A. Commemoration Day B. Remembrance Day C. Day of Honor D. Decoration Day
5. After which war was officially changed to Memorial Day? A. World War II B. Korean War C. Civil War D. World War I
6. Memorial Day was originally created to honor fallen soldiers of... A. The War of 1812 B. Civil War C. The Revolutionary War D. World War I
7. When was Memorial Day moved from May 30 to the last Monday in May? A. 1968 B. 1965 C. 1971 D. 1925
8. What city hosts the oldest Memorial Day parade? A. Doylestown, Pa. B. Portsmouth, Va. C. Ironton, Ohio D. Douglaston, N.Y.
9. Which major sporting event takes place each Memorial Day weekend? A. Belmont Stakes B. Indianapolis 500 C. NBA Finals D. U.S. Open
10. Which movie holds the record for the biggest Memorial Day weekend opening? A. Star Wars B. The Avengers C. The Hangover Part II D. Pirates of the Caribbean

Visit our ACRTA website on the ORTA webpage at 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, if you would like to see other information on the ACRTA site. Give it a visit and give your feedback.

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Unofficial minutes from the April luncheon are not available at this time. We will send them out as soon as they become available, and of course, they will be read and approved at the June 1, luncheon.

