



## NEWS AND MUSE

VOLUME 13 ISSUE 5      October - November 2023

### OCTOBER GENERAL MEETING AND LUNCHEON

Date: Thursday, October 5, at 11:30 AM

**Where:** Immanuel United Methodist Church, 699 Sunnydale St. Elida, OH 45807

**Lunch menu:** Appetizer, barbeque beef sandwich, potato salad, oriental salad, and apple crisp with ice cream. Coffee, lemonade, water.

**Raffle Item:** A gift card to the newly renovated OHIO THEATRE

**RSVP:** by Sunday, October 1, to Melinda King at 419-339-6993 or 567-204-7952. You may also email Melinda at [4300royalty@gmail.com](mailto:4300royalty@gmail.com)

Cost for the lunch is \$15 to be paid to Melinda **at the meeting**. Please **DO NOT** send your RSVP in the mail as it may not get to her in time.

If you just want to join us and not eat, you are welcome to come and have conversation with fellow educators at the table. We enjoy your company.

2024 Memberships will be collected at the OCTOBER and DECEMBER meetings. Please plan to renew your membership **before the end of December**. Invite other retired teachers to join us. Bring a guest to this or the December meeting! As a special incentive, anyone to renew or any new member to send in membership by the end of DECEMBER will be eligible for a monthly drawing of a \$10 gift card to Circle K. Drawings will be held January through June of 2024. Membership information is on the last page of this newsletter.

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

[Ohio STRS Member Only Forum](#)

[STRS Ohio Watchdogs](#)

[ACRTA Facebook page](#)

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[2023 ACRTA Meeting Dates](#)

**General Membership Meetings:** Lunch at 11:30 a.m. followed by program/meeting October 5, December 7

**Board Meeting:** 12 :00 p.m. Thursday, November 2. Grant readings will follow the meeting.

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The following quotations are in solidarity with those teachers starting a new school year!

1. Move over Batman, teachers are the true heroes!
2. I help create light bulb moments.
3. "Take chances, make mistakes, get messy!" – Ms. Frizzle, *The Magic School Bus*
4. Teachers change the world... even on Monday!
5. May your coffee be strong and your students be calm.



## (Ohio Retirement for Teachers Association)

### From the ORTA website:

#### Meet ORTA's new Executive Committee!

Dean Dennis, ORTA's new President, is a retired teacher from the Cincinnati Public Schools, Founder of the STRS Ohio Watchdogs, member of Hamilton County Retirees Chapter, and the Cincinnati Federation of Teachers Retiree Chapter.

Chris DeMarco is ORTA's Past President. ORTA thanks Chris for the work he has done this past year to advocate for Ohio's teachers and our retirement benefits. Chris is a retired teacher from the Cuyahoga Falls City Schools and President of the Portage County Retirement for Teachers Association.

Steve Seagraves is ORTA's President-Elect. Steve is a retired teacher from the Liberty Center Local Schools. He is a member of the Henry County Retirement for Teachers Association and a lifetime member of ORTA. Steve was a member of the statewide interview team for STRS Ohio Board candidates in 2022.

Members of the ORTA Executive Committee began their term in August 2023 and will serve through July 2024. Please visit the ORTA website to read a letter from Dean Dennis concerning his goals as the newly elected President of ORTA.

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**Remember! 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. Let's encourage active teachers to join!**

**ORTA continues to monitor the STRS board meetings and board activity. Please consider joining ORTA if you are not already a member. ORTA is our best source of accurate information concerning the STRS situation.**

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#### **WADE STEEN DEFENSE FUND**

**As previously reported, ORTA is building a defense fund to support WADE STEEN in his case protesting his removal from the board. ACRTA voted at the last general meeting to send funds to this cause, and we encourage your individual support also. Please visit the ORTA website to make your donation.**

<https://www.orta.org/defense-fund>

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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.

Also check the ACRTA Facebook page for updates from STRS and ORTA along with other information of interest

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October

November

Douglas	Kent	2	James	Buffenbarger	1
Kathy	Kennedy	3	Brian	Rockhold	2
Deb	Bohn	7	Linda S.	Fangler	3
Jane	Backus	10	Debra	Mullins	6
John	Bos	10	Norma	Johnson	10
Bonnie	Snyder	10	Christine	Crawford	13
Linda	Pugh	12	Patty	Lewis	15
Kathy	Gatchell	14	Joyce	Busch	22
Peggy	Miller	14	Dixie	Coffman	24
Brenda	Frazier	15	Marilyn	Martz	25
Teresa	Savidge	15	Ruth	Mowery	26
Devonne	Dickrede	16	Sharon	Carr	27
Marian	Berry	17	John	Byrne	29
Deb	Heatwole	18	Deb	Nelson	29
Alix	Stout	22	Linda	Stanley	30
Norma	Penn	27			
Williams	Peebles	28			
Sue	Cramer	30			

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

Can you unscramble these autumn words?

- |               |             |                  |               |
|---------------|-------------|------------------|---------------|
| 1. ANIRY      | 2. GANREO   | 3. SEEBMTRPE     | 4. OCREBOT    |
| 5. RLLCOUOF   | 6. RCAON    | 7. UTNMAU        | 8. KTYAACSH   |
| 9. OEBREVMN   | 10. AEFL    | 11. STAHERV      | 12. PERAS     |
| 13. SOSEAN    | 14. EAKDR   | 15. SLQEIURR     | 16. AHNNICGG  |
| 17. QSUASH    | 18. OWLELY  | 19. CRNO         | 20. PAELP     |
| 21. ELALHONWE | 22. UNPIPMK | 23. INGINHVSATKG | 24. UCENSHTST |



Answers on the next page.

## Message from the President

School is back in session, fog delays have already begun to mount up, and parent-teacher conferences will soon be scheduled. Luckily, most of us only have the memories of those events, but our wonderful active teachers are still facing those challenges and more! Every morning I think how grateful I am that I don't have to trudge off to school at 6:30 a.m., but I must admit there are times I truly do miss it! Many of our schools are desperately seeking substitutes, classroom aides, cafeteria workers, and bus drivers. If you have some spare time and/or the desire, consider volunteering to read to a classroom of little ones or assist the teacher a day or two a week. I know your time and efforts will be greatly appreciated.

As you will see in the STRS section of this newsletter a few changes have been made concerning our health benefits. We will be reporting on other STRS information at the October meeting. We *are being heard* thanks to newly elected board members fighting for change, retirees attending board meetings and questioning board activity, newspapers (such as the Toledo Blade) publishing articles about the STRS board's financial abuse, and several Columbus area news shows spotlighting our concerns. Above all, ORTA is keeping a keen eye on STRS and reporting back to retirees and actives alike! Please support the continued efforts of all these folks and don't turn a blind eye to what has been and is happening!

ACRTA membership is due by the end of December. As an incentive to get those memberships in on time, the board will be having drawings (January-June, 2024) one per month, for a \$10 gift card to Circle K stations. This can be used for gasoline or in the store for beverages, snacks, etc. To be eligible you must have turned in your paid membership by the end of December. Please invite fellow retirees to join us! Membership can be paid at the October or December meetings or by sending in your membership forms to our membership chair.

Melinda King, 3400 Alix Dr. Elida, OH 45807

I look forward to seeing you at the October meeting in at Immanuel United Methodist Church in Elida. Please make your reservations with Melinda by calling her at 567-204-7952 or emailing her at [3400royalty@gmail.com](mailto:3400royalty@gmail.com).

Reservations are due by October 1.

*Happy OHIO Autumn!*

*Norma*



## STRS News

The following information is taken from the STRS Members Only forum on Facebook. This is the schedule for this year's meetings. Meetings are open to the public.

Oct. 18-20, 2023	Regular meeting	Scramble answers 1. RAINY 2. ORANGE 3. SEPTEMBER 4. OCTOBER 5. COLORFUL 6. ACORN 7. AUTUMN 8. HAYSTACK 9. NOVEMBER 10. LEAF 11. HARVEST 12. PEARS 13. SEASON 14. RAKED 15. SQUIRREL 16. CHANGING 17. SQUASH 18. YELLOW 19. CORN 20. APPLE 21. HALLOWEEN 22. PUMPKIN 23. THANKSGIVING 24. CHESTNUTS
Nov. 15-17, 2023	Board education and planning	
Dec. 13-15, 2023	Regular meeting	
Feb. 14-16, 2024	Regular meeting	
March 20-22, 2024	Regular meeting and investment seminar	
April 17-19, 2024	Regular meeting	
May 15-17, 2024	Regular meeting	
June 19-21, 2024	Regular meeting	
Aug. 14-16, 2024	Regular meeting	

You should have received information about the following changes to your health care:

#### Medical Plan Transitions to Aetna

- All Medical Mutual, AultCare, Paramount and Health Care Assistance Plan (HCAP) enrollees will be covered by Aetna in 2024. Current Aetna enrollees will remain in their current plan.
- The Aetna Medicare Plan is making several coverage improvements, including a \$0 in-network annual deductible and \$0 copay for in-network primary care physician visits.

#### Pharmacy Plan Transitions to CVS Caremark (CVS) from Express Scripts

- All enrollees will transition to CVS; the majority of enrollees should experience no disruption to their service. Those who may see a disruption (such as a change to a higher or lower tier in the drug formulary) will be notified by mid-December.
- The CVS network includes about 66,000 chain and independent pharmacies, including Kroger, and about 9,000 CVS pharmacies. (Enrollees can use any in-network pharmacy; they are not limited to CVS store locations.)
- There are no changes to the prescription annual deductible, maximum out-of-pocket limit or drug tier copayments/coinsurance.
- Medicare enrollees will be covered by SilverScript, a Medicare Part D plan. SilverScript is an affiliate of CVS. Non-Medicare enrollees will be covered by CVS Caremark.

#### Access to Providers

Aetna's provider network includes nearly all the providers currently being utilized by Medical Mutual, AultCare and Paramount enrollees. The same is true for CVS's network. It covers nearly all ESI pharmacies currently being accessed.

## 2024 ALLEN COUNTY RETIRED TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Jan. 1, 2024 to Dec. 31, 2024

**Dues: ACRTA \$12, ORTA \$30 (optional)**

ACRTA _____	ORTA _____	GRANT _____
\$12.00	\$30.00	DONATION
(optional)		

**Over 90 Dues are Free**

Date paid \_\_\_\_\_ Cash \_\_\_\_\_ Check # \_\_\_\_\_  
This information is for our directory and contact list.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

Birth day: (mo.) \_\_\_\_\_ (day) \_\_\_\_\_ (year if you wish) \_\_\_\_\_

School District Retired From: \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete this form and return with cash/check  
written to ACRTA.

Send to: Melinda King

3400 Alix Dr. Eida, OH 45807

567-204-7952

3400royalty@gmail.com.



Welcome to the ACRTA!

