



BRTA NEWSLETTER

WWW.BRTA.BIZ

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2nd VP: Tom Giambra
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Ross Monteleone, Sue Nyitrai, Peter Riester

BUFFALO RETIRED TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

August, 2012

Coming Events

Sept. 5, 2012—Fall Luncheon at Millennium Hotel
Information on page 8

Sept. 13-17, 2012—Trip to Boston.

Sept. 19, 2012—NYS Retired Teachers Association—Western Zone luncheon and meeting
Information on Page 4

Dec 6, 2012—Holiday Luncheon at Salvatore's Italian Garden. Information in **next** newsletter.

April 21-May 4, 2013—Magnificent Cities of Eastern and Central Europe
Information on page 6

MEMBERSHIP REMINDER

If you need to renew your annual membership in BRTA, hopefully, you have mailed in the renewal form which was sent to you last month. This will ensure that no mailings, especially for the holiday activities, are missed.

If you have misplaced, or need another form, please contact Linda Parada at 875-3392.

President's Report

For some, the following may be a repeat of information already known. But I have had recent inquiries as to our pension. First of all, our pension is guaranteed by the NYS Constitution, which outlines how it is to be funded and distributed. For the most part, the only way to change it is to write a new constitution (in 2016, one will occur by law) or to legislate a new tier. We're up to tier 5 with a 6th being contemplated. By law, the funding for your pension is a dedicated fund to 120%, which means pension obligations must be funded by investments or, where they fall short, school boards are assessed amounts to make up the balance. This is not a request of school boards but an assessment. They have no choice but to pay. This system is unlike Social Security where active workers pay for the benefits of retirees.

Your health benefits do not come from the state system. Local boards provide them. At one time, these could be altered by contracts voted by active members (i.e. changed, dropped, or other). However, every year as far back as I can remember, retirees have lobbied (advocated) and the legislature and governor agreed to require Boards of Ed to honor health benefits as given at retirement. Finally several years ago, the legislature passed, and the governor signed, a guarantee of lifetime health care for teachers as given at retirement. Other municipal workers or fire or police do not enjoy this protection.

One of the retiree organizations that lobbied for this was the NYS Retired Teachers Assn. They also lobbied for a COLA. One of the original lobbyists was Jo Slacer.

The NYS Retired Teachers Assn. is having a meeting September 19, 2012 at Salvatore's Italian Gardens. An application for this meeting is in this issue of the newsletter. I strongly request you make every effort to attend, as the speaker for the luncheon is a representative for teachers to the pension system. A presentation and question and answer session will be offered. It's an opportunity to hear what's happening at the top from someone who is there.

Hope to see you at our annual meeting and then, at the Western Zone meeting.

---Al Marabella

**Benefits Available to
BRTA Members**

- **Long-term Care Insurance Workshops**
BRTA Discounts on Long-term Care Insurance: 1-800-655-4899
- **Eyewear Discount**
Eyewear Unlimited (716) 834-3511
Niagara Labmasters, Inc.
Niagara Falls, NY (716) 297-9115
Gary Optical
Lewiston, NY (716) 754-255
Boulevard Optical,
Tonawanda, NY (716) 694-4388
- **Tires and Service** Discounts at Dunn Tires
- **Dental Discounts** The North Park Dental Group (716) 836-2242
- **Dental Plan Insurance** Dental Pay Direct (716) 836-7013
- **Group Medical Insurance** for those who do not receive the benefit from their school district — Call Pam Styn at Dental Pay Direct (716) 836-7013 or toll free at 1-800-683-3682
- Vital Savings by Aetna—Mention membership when you inquire about discount programs designed to help you save on dental or pharmaceuticals. 1-877-877 MY VITAL (1-877-698-4825) or www.vitalsavings.com
- Ballroom, Latin, Swing and other styles of dance—Tara Scime at 491-0186 or TMSDance@yahoo.com. Mention your BRTA membership and receive a discount.

In Memoriam

Helen Blatz	April, 2012
William Burns	May, 2012
David N. Wilson	May, 2012
Marjorie Linhardt	June, 2012
Robert Duerr	June, 2012
Michael Accordino	June, 2012
Penelope Thomas	July, 2012

BRTA would like to acknowledge the passing of those teachers who have served the children of Buffalo. If you would like to have someone included in the "In Memoriam" listings, please notify Elisa Harting (838-3708).

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The Food Shuttle of Western New York helps feed the hungry by transporting excess food from supermarkets and other food-related businesses to soup kitchens, food pantries and shelters. There is a need for more drivers. You can select your own "shuttle runs" and sign up one month at a time for the number of times you are available to drive during that month. For more information, or to volunteer, call Louise Seereiter at 839-1797 or the Food Shuttle Hot Line at 688-2527.

*Congratulations to
all newly retired teachers!*

Congratulations to those celebrating anniversaries

Bernie and Mickey Martin
50th anniversary

RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE MAKES RECOMMENDATIONS

The Resolutions Committee of Western Zone has submitted three proposed resolutions to the NYSRTA Resolutions Committee for review and recommendation. If recommended, they will be submitted for voting at the NYSRTA annual conference held at Turning Stone Resort and Casino, Verona, New York in October. In summation, the “resolves” are:

“...that NYSTRA calls on the U.S. Congress and Administration to overhaul the Elementary and Secondary School Act, currently known as the “No Child Left Behind Act,” reduce the testing mandates, promote multiple forms of evidence of student learning and school quality in accountability, and not mandate any fixed role for the use of student test scores in evaluating educators.” (Anti-testing Resolution)

“...that NYSRTA support the continuation of the federal Medicare program to guarantee the availability of health care to our senior citizens without the imposition of a privatized voucher system or the creation of health savings accounts for all seniors”

“...that no funding reduction be made to the current Medicare program.” (the Federal Medicare Program Resolution)

“...that NYSRTA support the concept and continuing practice of collective bargaining as essential to the establishment and maintenance of a mutually agreeable relationship between employers and employees in both public and private sectors”

“...that NYSRTA continue to support efforts at the State and Federal levels to maintain and improve collective bargaining.” (Support for Collective Bargaining Resolution)

The NYSRTA Resolution Committee met on July 9, 2012 in Utica, New York to review the proposed resolutions submitted by the ten zones. Actions or recommendations for the proposed resolutions will be presented and submitted by the NYSRTA Chair Emily Castine to the NYSRTA Executive Board on July 10th. The proposed resolutions will be published in the fall issue of YORK STATE with indication of “recommended” or “not recommended.”

—Theresa Pope
Chair

Frequently Requested Numbers

Website: www.brta.biz

President: Al Marabella—635-9530

Membership: Linda Parada—837-3392

Luncheons: Ophelia Nicholas—633-1690

Travel: Russ Gervasi—839-5781

NYS Retired Teachers Association Western Zone

Cordially invites members & guests to attend

The Annual Meeting & Luncheon

Wednesday, September 19, 2012 at

Salvatore's Italian Gardens

6461 Transit Rd., Depew, NY 14043 (683-7990)

Program to include Speaker David Keefe NYS Teacher Retirement System

8:30 Registration & Exploration of Vendor Displays. Coffee & sweets also will be available.

9:00 Speaker David Keefe, Teacher Rep to the NYS Teacher Retirement System

10:00 Vendors available

10:30 General Membership Meeting

12:15 Luncheon with Board meeting to follow.

Luncheon with Salad, Potato, Vegetable, Dessert, and Coffee or Tea

Choice of:

- | | |
|--|---------|
| 1) Filet Mignon | \$26.00 |
| 2) Salmon with Lobster dill sauce | \$26.00 |
| 3) Chicken Milanese: with Panko, Tomato, Red Onion & Asiago Cheese | \$19.00 |
| 4) Vegetable Plate (available upon request) | \$19.00 |

Reservation Deadline: September 9, 2012

Checks Payable to: Western Zone NYSRTA

Mail to: Buffalo Retired Teachers Assn

P.O. Box 1009 Attn: Russell Gervasi

Williamsville, NY 14231

(Detach and mail lower portion only. Keep upper portion as your reminder)

Western Zone NYSRTA Annual Meeting, September 19, 2012

Cost: \$26. Filet or Salmon— \$19. Chicken or Vegetarian

Name _____ Phone # _____

Address _____ NYSTRA Member? Yes No

_____ Local Unit _____

e-Mail Address _____

My Meal Choice is # _____

Guest Name _____ Meal Choice # _____

Guest Name _____ Meal Choice # _____

Scholarship Winners Announced

It is with great pleasure that the Scholarship Committee has chosen five candidates to receive the 2012 BRTA Scholarships. The scores for the top 4 positions were all very close – within a few points of each other. The fifth scholarship - in honor of Josephine Slacer - is a candidate who is not only academically successful but demonstrated her commitment to community service and school service. The awardees are as follows:

Nhi Kha is an outstanding senior from Hutchinson Central Technical High School, where she is 6th in a class of 263 students. Her activities include JROTC, Tennis Team, B.E.A.M. Club, National History Day Team (placing 1st on the city competition and 1st in the regional competition), M.I.C.E. program at UB (placed 2nd in the Business Competition), Junior Class Council and Student Council. She also works at the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library and with the Mayor's Summer Youth Leadership Program. Nhi has earned many awards and honors - NYS Scholarship for Academic Excellence, National Honor Society, American Legion Scholastic Medal, Frederick Douglas & Susan B Anthony Award, Daughters of the American Revolution. Nhi hope to become a physician and travel to third world nations helping the sick.

An Tran is the Valedictorian from Hutchinson Central Technical High School. Her activities include JROTC, Math League, B.E.A.M. Club, Soccer Team, peer tutoring, National History Day Team (placing 1st on the city competition and 1st in the regional competition), M.I.C.E. program at UB (placed 2nd in the Business Competition), Food Drive for WNY Food Bank and clean up crew for neighborhood parks. She has earned many awards and honors such as National Honor Society, American Region Scholastic Award, Rensselaer Medal awards for Math & Science, JROTC Fitness Award. An aspires to become a cardiologist.

Niamh Durfee is an outstanding senior from City Honors School who loves math and science, and participates in Varsity Cross-country, Varsity Track & Field, AP Chemistry Club & Chemistry Olympiad, and the Donate For Life Club. Niamh also worked as a lab intern with Buffalo State College's Population Genetics Lab gathering data on loons and she was a summer volunteer at Children's Hospital and student tutor. She received an All WNY Scholar Athlete award, a first team member on Business First's WNY Academic Team, and a recipient of the Harvard Book Prize. Niamh's aim is to epitomize the philosopher Lao Tzu "good traveler" who has no fixed plans, exploring all avenues of life - never a finish line but always a purpose.

Rayna Moncrieffe is an outstanding senior from City Honors School who is a student ambassador welcoming new and exchange students to City Honors School. She is a member of Student Council, Art Club, Varsity Cheerleading, Varsity Volleyball and Rugby Club. Her non-school interests include Career Opportunities in the Accounting Profession Program, Mezaros International Center for Entrepreneurship Program, Episcopal Central Erie Deanery Program and a Community Leader Activist. Rayna hopes to attend Howard University Business School and study accounting to become a CPA working with the community in financial literacy.

The Josephine Slacer Award will be presented to **Bria Green**, a senior from The Buffalo Academy for the Visual and Performing Arts. Bria quoted Maya Angelou "Nothing works unless you do" and feels these are words to live by as demonstrated by her school and non-school activities. She volunteered at the Ujima Theater, the Buffalo Zoo, the American Red Cross Blood Drive, the Breast Cancer Walk-a-ton, the City Courts and Literacy Advocates. She participated in her school's City Mock Trials, Soccer, Volleyball, and Tennis clubs. She was the Junior Class Secretary and had the lead roll in a school play. Bria is also a member of the National Honor Society. She hopes to study Computer Informational Systems and teach others what she has learned.

The committee is proud to offer these names to the Buffalo Retired Teacher Association as the 2012 BRTA Scholarship recipients.

—Clarann Josef

“Magnificent Cities of Eastern & Central Europe”

After the BRTA September luncheon, a representative of Collette Vacations, Matt DeRamo, will meet with people interested in traveling to Eastern Europe, April 21—May 4, 2013. Here is a brief description of the trip:

- 4/21 Flight
- 4/22 Arrive in Berlin. See the Pergamum Museum during free time.
- 4/23 Morning trip to Potsdam to see Sans Souci Palace. Afternoon comprehensive tour of Berlin, including Brandenburg Gate, Charlottenburg Palace, Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial & more.
- 4/24 Travel to Dresden, Capital of Saxony and on to Prague.
- 4/25 In Prague, visit Hradcany Castle, St. Vitus Cathedral and more.
- 4/26 On to Vienna
- 4/27 Guided Tour of Vienna: St. Stephen’s Cathedral, Schoenbrunn Palace, and more.
- 4/28 Budapest with the Danube separating Buda and Pest
- 4/29 Local guide tour of Budapest—in my opinion the most romantic city in Eastern Europe.
- 4/30 Enroute to Poland. Visit the old city square in Krakow and enjoy pivo (beer).
- 5/1 Tour Krakow, Wawel Castle and great shops.
- 5/2 Tour Auschwitz (very moving), Czestochowa (very dramatic), Warsaw (very gray).
- 5/3 Tour of Warsaw
- 5/4 Return Home.

Side trips to more sites are available.

If interested, attend the meeting or call Al Marabella @ 635-9530 for information and/or registration forms.

NEWS SHORTS

The Card Club will not be meeting in August. The next meeting will be September 17, 2012 at Friendly’s Restaurant on Maple Road. For information, call Carolyn Carderella 689-8838

East High School Class of ‘72 is holding its 40 year reunion and is looking for faculty members to be guests at the “meet and greet” to be held at the school on Northampton Street on Friday, August 10th, from 6pm to 9pm. For more information, contact Cindi (Moore) Clarke 816-3240 (cclarke@buffaloschools.org) or Exonuel I. Ingram 404-731-6465 (econuel@yahoo.com).

Congrats to Tom Giambra. While golfing with the BRTA league at the Audubon Par 3 course, he scored a hole-in-one.

The BRTA Don Guerra Golf Outing, despite a rainfall which cut our golfing short, had another great day on June 12th. Golfers enjoyed hearty laughs, great eats, congenial companionship and a game of golf. Many prizes were won ... many golf balls were lost ... but fun and food was second to none. Terry Hills... we shall return!! Thanks to Ross Monteleone and his committee.

Ways to Save and Go Green -- Part II

In the last newsletter article, I mentioned that you should try making your own non-toxic cleaning materials. I will share with you some homemade substitutions. Some of the main ingredients are baking soda, vinegar and lemon, all of which you have around your home. Go to the dollar store and purchase the large spray bottles to put your solutions in. Around my home, I mainly use white vinegar and water for many cleaning uses. I am satisfied with the outcome. Instead of using a regular cotton cloth for cleaning and dusting, try using a microfiber cloth which can be used to lift dirt, grease and dust without the need for cleaning chemicals. I especially like to use it to clean my computer screen and my flat screen TV.

- **All Purpose Cleaner** – Mix ½ cup of vinegar and ¼ cup of baking soda or 2 teaspoons of borax into ½ gallon of water. Store and keep. Use for removal of water deposit stains on shower stall panels, bathroom chrome fixtures, windows, bathroom mirrors, toilet bowls and etc.
- **Air Fresheners** –
 - Put baking soda or vinegar with lemon juice in small dishes around your house to help absorb odors.
 - Grind up a lemon in your garbage disposal.
 - Simmer water and cinnamon on the stove. You may also use other spices.
 - House plants help reduce odors in homes
 - Set a sliced onion on a plate in the center of your basement or garage for 12 – 24 hours. It will help deodorize the space.
- **Bathroom Mold** –Mix one part hydrogen peroxide with two parts water in a spray bottle. Spray on the area with mold. Wait at least one hour before rinsing or using the shower.
- **Carpet Stains** –
 - Mix equal parts of white vinegar and water in a spray bottle. Spray directly on the stain, let it sit for several minutes and clean with a brush or sponge using warm soapy water.
 - For grease spots, sprinkle corn starch onto the spot and wait 15 – 30 minutes then vacuum.
 - For heavy duty carpet cleaner, mix ¼ cup each of salt, borax and vinegar. Rub the paste mixture into the carpet and leave it for a few hours then vacuum.
- **Cutting Board Cleaner** – Rub a slice of lemon across your board to disinfect the surface.
- **Coffee and Tea Stains** –
 - Stains in cups can be removed by applying vinegar to a sponge and wiping. You may also sprinkle baking soda in the cup and wipe out with a wet paper towel.
 - To clean a teakettle or coffee maker, add 2 cups of water and ¼ cup of vinegar. Bring to a boil then let cool. Wipe with a clean cloth and rinse thoroughly with water.

Source: "Eartheasy"

---Josephine Cross

Buffalo Retired Teachers Association

Invites members & guests to attend

BRTA Fall Luncheon and Annual Meeting

To take place at

The Millennium Hotel of Buffalo

2040 Walden Avenue

Phone: 681-2400

Wednesday September 5, 2012

Social Hour: 11:15 Complimentary Fruit Punch & Cash Bar

Luncheon: 12:15 Choice of:

- 1) Grilled Filet of Sirloin (to medium) with onion grass & Béarnaise Sauce.
 - 2) Chicken Breast Francaise. Lightly breaded & pan-seared. Topped with lemon butter sauce & artichokes.
 - 3) Haddock Filet Italiano. Baked with Italian herbs, chopped tomato & black olives.
- Meals are served with Salad, Rolls, Potato, Vegetable, Dessert & Coffee or Tea

Q & A with Representative of “Magnificent Cities of Eastern & Central Europe” trip after luncheon

Cost: \$19.00 for Members
\$24.00 for Non-Members

Payment: Due by Thursday, August 30, 2012

Payable to: Check made out to Buffalo Retired Teachers Association

Mail to: Ophelia Nicholas (633-1690)
9 Steinway Court
Williamsville, NY 14221

Note: No cash refunds will be given after the reservation deadline.

(Detach and mail lower portion only. Keep upper portion as your reminder)

Fall Luncheon September 5, 2012
Cost \$19. Members \$24. Non-Members

Please reserve _____ seat(s) for me for the Autumn Luncheon.

My Check for \$_____ is enclosed My Choice for Meal is # _____

Name _____ Phone _____

Guest Name _____ Meal Choice # _____

Guest Name _____ Meal Choice # _____