



BRTA NEWSLETTER

www.brta.biz

brtamembership@yahoo.com

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Spring edition

April, 2015

UPCOMING EVENTS

May—Sept., 2015—
BRTA travelling golf
league

May 28, 2015—Spring
Luncheon at Park Coun-
try Club—info on page 8

June 9, 2015—Don
Guerra Open at Terry
Hills—info on page 4

July 7—14, 2015—
America's Cowboy Coun-
try

Aug. 7-16, 2015—
British Landscapes Tour:
England, Scotland &
Wales

Sept. 9, 2015—Fall
Luncheon at the Millen-
nium

Oct. 9—18, 2015—
Splendid Sicilia trip.

Dec. 3, 2015—Holiday
Luncheon at Salvatore's
Italian Gardens

Dec. 10—18, 2015—
Classic Christmas Mar-
kets (Germany and Aus-
tria)

Feb. 8--16, 2016—Trip
to Tropical Costa Rica

June, 2016—Trip to
South Dakota &
Badlands

Sept. 22—Oct. 3,

President's Message

At the time of this writing, spring has just given WNY a week of 60's & 70's. I know it's a no-brainer but how can one really, thoroughly enjoy and revel in this glorious season without at least experiencing some of last winter in Buffalo with which to contrast it?

As of now, nominations are still open for any and all elected officers. Please consider offering your time and talent to the organization. Elections will be held before the luncheon on September 9th. Please plan to attend and vote to support the candidates of your choice.

State and Federal Education departments are back in the news. I'm sure you've been keeping up with the sideshow. First, parents may opt out of testing for their child. Boards of Education may not. Is that rational? Quandary, now that in some cases, 70% of students opted out. Who is to blame? Well, of course, it must be the teachers' fault. You know how they are. They can't teach the students to read and write (oops! No more cursive needed in the electronic age.), but they certainly can convince the parents to get the kids out of testing. Does that sound reasonable to you? Both departments of education need a goat. Guess who it always is! They are currently contemplating disciplinary actions against boards, teachers, and anyone else, except parents and students, who have said, "Enough is enough!" If these tests were used to aid students' learning or identify areas that need improvement, OK maybe. But to be used to rank students nationally? To identify weak teachers? If one has a classroom of 25 students, and 5 are repeating the subject or grade level, 5 are students with special needs, 5 are students who are absent 25 days of the 30 day quarter...who is weak? Would you expect to get a bell curve in testing this group of students or is it the teacher's inability to create lessons for each of 25 students? Is this a rational expectation?

Have you noticed that those who have little or no experience in the classroom are the ones who seem to know how teachers should teach, what method is best, etc.? How many teachers are asked to be part of constructing curriculum or testing curriculum first before mandating them to entire districts or states or the nation? I thought the constitution granted the power to educate to the states. Even as retirees, our teaching experience means even less. Former and present superintendents have rejected BRTA assistance in discussing possible solutions to recurring problems.

The governor will hold a state constitutional convention in 2017, as required by State law. Remember that your pension is governed, and can be changed, by the state constitution. Be vigilant. Support those candidates who defend realistic educational goals.

Benefits Available to
BRTA Members

Long-term Care Insurance; 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 Tire

Dental Discounts

The North Park Dental Group
716-836-2242

Vital Savings by Aetna—Mention membership when you are inquiring about discount programs designed to help you save on dental or pharmaceuticals. 1-877-MY-VITAL (1-800-698-4825) or www.vitalsavings.com

Ballroom, Latin, Swing and Other Styles of Dance—Tara Scime at 716-491-0186 or TMSDance@yahoo.com. Mention your BRTA membership and receive a discount.

Faculty Rewards—Discount magazine subscriptions. Go to www.facultyrewards.com and use code 403360

BPO—Call Ambrose Price at 885-5001 for discount tickets

IN MEMORIAM

Francis Eugene Benbenek

Gail Filipski

John Graves

Janeann Haggerty

Louis Harasty

David Hess

Amele Kava

Grace Kerr

Sally Moran

Concetta Muscarella

Marcia O'Neill

Rita Podgorny

Charles M. Samuel

Chester Stanko

Michael Tritto

Hazel Bryant Vanlandingham

Catherine Wiggins

BRTA would like to acknowledge the passing of those teachers who served the children of Buffalo. If you would like to have someone included in the "In Memoriam" listings, please notify Josephine Cross (636-3014).

Frequently Requested Numbers

Website: www.brta.biz Email: brtamembership@yahoo.com

President: Al Marabella—635-9530

Membership: Linda Parada—875-3392

Luncheons: Ophelia Nicholas—633-1690

Travel: Russ Gervasi—839-5781

Newsletter: Al Marabella—635-9530

Friendly Service: Josephine Cross—636-3014

GOLF TOURNAMENT 2015

The 2015 Don Guerra Golf Tournament will again be held at Terry Hills Golf Course in Batavia on Tuesday, June 9, 2015. Golfers should plan on arriving no later than 12 noon, with a shotgun start at 12:30pm.

Golfers will be given either a hot dog or hamburger with a soft drink before the start and a steak dinner once the tournament is over. A round of golf with cart, lunch and free beer with dinner and all prizes are included in the price of \$85.00 per golfer.

Door prizes for everyone this year will include restaurant gift cards, wine, golf towels, golf balls, golf umbrellas, tees and gift cards to Lowes and Home Depot.

Single golfers are more than welcome along with the usual foursomes. Contact Steve Parada for reservations: phone 875-3392, email at srada48@yahoo.com, or mail in the form below.

BUFFALO RETIRED TEACHERS ANNUAL GOLF OUTING

The Don Guerra Open

Terry Hills Golf Course 5122 Clinton St. (1 mile east of Batavia on Rte. 33... 8 minutes from NYS Thruway Exit 48)

Tuesday, June 9, 2015 Report and sign in at 11:15 am but no later than 12:00 pm

Cost \$85.00 per golfer includes 18 holes of golf with cart, hot dog or hamburger before tee-off, steak dinner after golf with free beer and prizes for everyone.

Reservations no later than June 1, 2015... Limit 108 golfers... Foursomes and individuals all welcome.

Make checks payable to BUFFALO RETIRED TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Mail entry and check to

Stephen Parada 23 Tremont Avenue Kenmore, NY 14217

You may contact Steve with inquiries by phone 716-875-3392 or e-mail srada48@yahoo.com

Foursome or Individual Names , Address, and phone numbers

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Looking for information for the trips mentioned on page 1?

Interested in going to England, Sicily, Germany, Costa Rica, South Dakota, or Poland?

Go to the BRTA website (www.brta.biz), and simply click on the "Events" link. All the information and the contact telephone numbers are there!

Health News: Arthritis

The following information comes from **National Institute on Aging Information Center** P.O. Box 8057, Gaithersburg, MD 20898-8057, 1-800-222-2225 (toll-free) or www.nia.nih.gov

There are many kinds of arthritis, each with different symptoms and treatments. Most types of arthritis are chronic which means they can go on for a long period of time. It is one of the most common diseases in the United States. Rheumatoid and Gout arthritis are other common forms. I will focus on Osteoarthritis (OA) for this article.

Arthritis can attack joints in almost any part of the body. Osteoarthritis (OA) is the most common type of arthritis in older people. OA starts when tissue, called cartilage, that pads bones in a joint begins to wear away. When the cartilage has worn away, your bones rub against each other. OA most often happens in your hands, neck, lower back, or the large weight-bearing joints of your body, such as knees and hips.

OA symptoms range from stiffness and mild pain that comes and goes to pain that doesn't stop, even when you are resting or sleeping. Sometimes OA causes your joints to feel stiff after you haven't moved them for a while, like after riding in the car. The stiffness goes away when you move the joint. Over time, OA can make it hard to move your joints. It can cause a disability if your back, knees, or hips are affected.

Growing older is what most often puts you at risk for OA, possibly because your joints and the cartilage around them become less able to recover from stress and damage. Also, OA in the hands may run in families. Or, OA in the knees can be linked with being overweight. Injuries or overuse may cause OA in joints such as knees, hips, or hands.

Treatment Goals: Manage Pain, Improve Function. Osteoarthritis treatment plans often include ways to manage pain and improve function. Such plans can include exercise, rest and joint care, pain relief, weight control, medicines, surgery, and non-traditional treatment approaches.

Current treatments for osteoarthritis can relieve symptoms such as pain and disability, but right now there are no treatments that can cure osteoarthritis.

Exercise: One of the Best Treatments. Exercise is one of the best treatments for osteoarthritis. It can improve mood and outlook, decrease pain, increase flexibility, and help you maintain a healthy weight.

The amount and form of exercise will depend on which joints are involved, how stable the joints are, whether or not the joint is swollen, and whether a joint replacement has already been done. Ask your doctor or physical therapist what exercises are best for you. The following types of exercise are part of a well-rounded arthritis treatment plan.

Strengthening exercises. These exercises strengthen muscles that support joints affected by arthritis. They can be performed with weights or with exercise bands, inexpensive devices that add resistance. **Aerobic activities.** These are exercises, such as brisk walking or low-impact aerobics, that get your heart pumping and can keep your lungs and circulatory system in shape. **Range-of-motion activities.** These keep your joints limber. **Balance and agility exercises.** **Weight Control.** If you are overweight or obese, you should try to lose weight. Weight loss can reduce stress on weight-bearing joints, limit further injury, increase mobility, and reduce the risk of associated health problems. A dietitian can help you develop healthy eating habits. A healthy diet and regular exercise help reduce weight. **Rest and Relief from Stress on Joints.** Treatment plans include regularly scheduled rest. You must learn to recognize the body's signals, and know when to stop or slow down. This will prevent the pain caused by overexertion. **Non-drug Pain Relief and Alternative Therapies.** People with osteoarthritis may find many nondrug ways to relieve pain. Below are some examples. **Heat and cold.** Heat or cold (or a combination of the two) can be useful for joint pain. Heat can be applied in a number of different ways -- with warm towels, hot packs, or a warm bath or shower -- to increase blood flow and ease pain and stiffness. In some cases, cold packs (bags of ice or frozen vegetables wrapped in a towel), which reduce inflammation, can relieve pain or numb the sore area. (Check with a doctor or physical therapist to find out if heat or cold is the best treatment.)

(continued on page 7)

BPO BUFFALO PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA
JOANN FALLETTA MUSIC DIRECTOR

**2 ways to enjoy Your BPO!
Great savings!**

**EXCLUSIVE 20% OFF
FOR BUFFALO RETIRED TEACHERS!**



Fri. May 22, 10:30AM

Sat. May 23, 8PM

A Memorial Day tradition! Join the BPO in a salute to our nation and the men and women who have served and sacrificed to safeguard our freedom.

Ella, Louis and all that Jazz

Sat. Jun. 6, 8PM

Experience the glory days of jazz when **Byron Stripling**, artistic director of the Columbus Jazz Orchestra, and Broadway star **Marva Hicks** join forces to pay tribute to two of the jazz world's most talented musicians.



**Call for tickets today!
(716)885-5001 | bpo.org**

MENTION OR ENTER DISCOUNT CODE BRTA

M01597

Attention Buffalo Retired Teachers!
Stay in Control of Your Finances and Health Care Options

Workshop Highlights:

- Learn the Difference Between Health Care and Long-Term Care
- How to Avoid Being Forced to Sell Your Assets or Surrender Your Money to Medicaid
- Review the NEW and More Restrictive Medicaid Eligibility and Asset Transfer Rules
- Avoid Depleting A Lifetime Of Savings, Investments and Assets
- Provide Yourself With Choices For Your Care
- How to Know if Long-Term Care Insurance is Right for You
- Review the Exclusive Benefits and Discounts of the BRTA LTC Insurance Plans
- Learn About The FIVE New York State Partnership For Long-Term Care Plans

Long-Term Care Insurance Workshop

For Buffalo Retired Teachers
Conducted by Stephen M. Polizzi, CMFC, CLTC, CRPS

Tuesday, May 12, 2015
4:00 PM - 5:30 PM
Buffalo Teachers Federation
271 Porter Avenue
Buffalo, NY 14201

Program is open to family members!
Snacks and refreshments will be served.



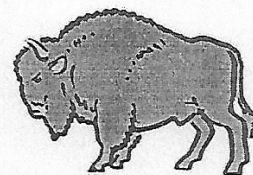
-----Save top portion as a reminder!-----



Buffalo Retired Teachers Association

Long-Term Care Insurance Workshop

Tuesday, May 12, 2015
4:00 PM - 5:30 PM
Buffalo Teachers Federation
271 Porter Avenue
Buffalo, NY 14201



Three Ways To Register
Mail, this completed form (address and phone required) to:
SMP Agency, 1320 Buffalo Rd, Ste 211, Rochester, NY 14624
Call, 1-800-655-4899 (24 hours a day)
Online, visit www.insurancemate.com/brtaseminar.html

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Home Phone _____ Number Attending _____

I cannot attend, but I would like more information.
Please send me an informational packet.

Health News: Arthritis (continued from page 4)

Transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation (TENS). TENS is a technique that uses a small electronic device to direct mild electric pulses to nerve endings that lie beneath the skin in the painful area. TENS may relieve some arthritis pain. It seems to work by blocking pain messages to the brain and by modifying pain perception. **Massage.** In this pain-relief approach, a massage therapist will lightly stroke and/or knead the painful muscles. This may increase blood flow and bring warmth to a stressed area. However, arthritis-stressed joints are sensitive, so the therapist must be familiar with the problems of the disease. **Acupuncture.** Some people have found pain relief using acupuncture, a practice in which fine needles are inserted by a licensed acupuncture therapist at specific points on the skin. Scientists think the needles stimulate the release of natural, pain-relieving chemicals produced by the nervous system. A large study supported by the National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases (NIAMS) and the National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM) revealed that acupuncture relieves pain and improves function in knee osteoarthritis, and it serves as an effective complement to standard care. **Nutritional supplements,** such as glucosamine and chondroitin sulfate have been reported to improve the symptoms of people with osteoarthritis, as have certain vitamins. **Folk remedies.** These include the wearing of copper bracelets, following special diets, and rubbing WD-40 on joints to “lubricate” them. Although these practices may or may not be harmful, no scientific research to date shows that they are helpful in treating osteoarthritis. They can also be expensive, and using them may cause people to delay or even abandon useful medical treatment.

Reduce the Risks of NSAID Use. Most medicines used to treat osteoarthritis have side effects, so it is important for people to learn about the medicines they take. For example, people over age 65 and those with any history of ulcers or stomach bleeding should use non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, or NSAIDs, with caution.

There are measures you can take to help reduce the risk of side effects associated with NSAIDs. These include taking medications with food and avoiding stomach irritants such as alcohol, tobacco, and caffeine. In some cases, it may help to take another medication along with an NSAID to coat the stomach or block stomach acids. Although these measures may help, they are not always completely effective.

Be Well,
Jo Ann Meyer

Interested in running for office or working on the BRTA board? Simply email a letter of intent to BRTAmembership@yahoo.com. A member of the elections committee will contact you!

Interested in joining the traveling golf league? For more information, just email asking for information (BRTAmembership@yahoo.com). Please include your contact information (name, phone number, and email address).

Like to play pinochle? The BRTA card club meets on the third Monday of the month at Friendly’s Restaurant on Maple Road in Amherst. Call Carolyn Cardarella (689-8838) for more information.

Buffalo Retired Teachers Association

Cordially Invites Members & Guests to attend

BRTA Spring Luncheon

To be held at

The Park Country Club
4949 Sheridan Dr. Amherst, NY

716-632-2121

Thursday, May 28, 2015

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

Luncheon: 12:15 pm Choice of:

- 1) Tournedos of Beef with Red Wine demi glaze
- 2) Grilled Chicken over Penne pasta with pink vodka sauce
- 3) Salmon with Dill buerre blanc sauce

Luncheon includes Salad, Vegetable, Dessert, and Beverage

Cost: \$25.00 for Members --\$30.00 for Non-member Guests

(BRTA subsidizes cost for members)

Payment: **Due by Tuesday May 19, 2015**

Payable to: Buffalo Retired Teachers Association

Mail to: Ophelia Nicholas (633-1690)

9 Steinway Court

Williamsville, NY 14221

Note Bene: No cash refunds given after reservation deadline.

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

Spring Luncheon May 28, 2015

Cost \$25. Members \$30. Non-Members

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

My Check for \$_____ is enclosed

My Choice for Meal is # _____

Name _____ Phone _____

Guest Name _____ Meal Choice # _____

Guest Name _____ Meal Choice # _____