



# BRTA NEWSLETTER

[www.brta.biz](http://www.brta.biz)

[brtamembership@yahoo.com](mailto:brtamembership@yahoo.com)

President: Al Marabella

Recording Sec.: Dolores Scanlon

1st VP: Thomas Giambra

Corresponding Sec.:

2nd VP: Charles Peszynski

Membership Sec.: Linda Parada

Treasurer: Stephen Parada

At Large: Mike Marszalek, Ophelia Nicholas,  
Theresa Pope

Board Members: Carolyn Cardarella, Josephine Cross, Russell Gervasi, Clarann Josef, Floyd Kruschke, Cynthia Mehary, JoAnn Meyer, Ross Monteleone, Sue Nyitrai, Peter Riester

Winter edition

January, 2015

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Feb. 26, 2015**—Winter Luncheon at Brookfield Country Club; information on page 6.

**May—Sept., 2015**—BRTA travelling Golf League

**May, 2015**—Spring Luncheon at Park Country Club

**June 1—5, 2015**—Trip to Cape Cod

**June 9, 2015**—Don Guerra Open at Terry Hills; information on page 3.

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

**Sept. 9, 2015**—Fall Luncheon at the Millennium

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

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

**Feb., 2016**—Trip to Tropical Costa Rica

## President's Message

Happy New Year! I hope the Holiday Season went as planned and all had a great time and made great memories. My hope is to just remember. Of course, I'm much older than most.

BRTA belongs to its members. This fall an election of officers will take place. Most of the existing board members have served the time in that office allotted by our by-laws. Ergo, new people are needed to staff the organization. Current officers will assist new members in assuming the duties of office. You won't be alone. Please consider serving for the good of the organization. It can be enjoyable.

You may have read that the BTF and the Buffalo Board of Ed are trying to arrive at an agreeable contract. We, as retirees, have no representation to advocate for us in this negotiation. However, BTF has always considered the retirees in negotiating contracts. The Board issued a statement saying that the retired teachers' health insurance coverage will not change. The state enacted a law stating they may not change the coverage that the retiree got at retirement. I can't imagine this affected the Board's position. Don't get too comfortable. The state can always make a new law. Retired Teachers—Be Vigilant.

I'm sure all must know by now the good Commissioner of State Ed is leaving or, by the time you read this, has left for a Federal Post in education. Perhaps it will bury him and not give him a platform to affect education on the national level. He's part of the push for Charter Schools. I believe he has a financial interest in one in New England. His last gift to Buffalo Public Schools was to extend the time to apply for a Charter in Buffalo and to allot money to pay to start new "magnets" (charters)? The next step is to replace teachers with programmed learning on computers. The trouble is who keeps the student on task.

I don't know if you're familiar with "better the devil you know than...". I guess the State Ed Department has it in for the Buffalo Public Schools. The temporary commissioner, Merryl Tisch, has sent a letter to the board citing numerous shortcomings, ultimately suggesting that the State Ed take over Buffalo Public Schools. (A name change would be in order, I guess, to NYS Public Schools & Charters in Buffalo.) Tisch proposes ultimately that the State Legislature give the State Board of Ed the power of law to do just that. Some attribute this directive to Gov. Cuomo. A current board of Ed member might agree as he was his opponent in the Governor's Race. But time will tell. Who really speaks for the students?

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](http://www.vitalsavings.com)

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

**Faculty Rewards**—Discount magazine subscriptions. Go to [www.facultyrewards.com](http://www.facultyrewards.com) and use code 403360

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

*IN MEMORIAM*

Joan Ann Haggerty	October, 2014
George N. Gegenfurtner Sr.	November, 2014
Dolletha "Dolly" Holmes	November, 2014
Jean McCoy	December, 2014
Elizabeth Burgos	December, 2014

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-

Frequently Requested Numbers

Website: [www.brta.biz](http://www.brta.biz) Email: [brtamembership@yahoo.com](mailto: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

## NEWS BRIEFS

**The BRTA Card Club** will be resuming its monthly meetings on Monday, February 16 at Friendly's Restaurant on Maple Road at 10AM. If interested, call Carolyn Cardarella at 689-8838.

## 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 or email at srada48@yahoo.com.

## **YEAR IN REVIEW—2014**

**BRTA Contributes to Charities**—Monies collected in December 2013 from the "Holiday Buckets" amounted to \$535 and were donated to Cornerstone Manor. Monies collected from the split club at the same luncheon in the amount of \$750 were given to the Food Shuttle of Buffalo. The Winter Luncheon split club collected \$200 for the Variety Club Telethon. The spring and fall luncheons split clubs collected money for the BRTA Scholarship Fund in the amount of \$321 and \$383 respectively.

**Scholarships Awarded**—So far this year, we have awarded \$1000 scholarships to Edward Bennett from Hutch Tech, Ashley Whiteside from Olmstead, Starr Johnson from BAVPA and Dhalia Akthar from daVinci. Thanks to chairwoman, Clarann Josef.

**Travel**—Members have traveled this year to London and Paris in April, the Canadian Rockies in July and Israel in November. Thanks to Russ Gervasi and Al Marabella.

**Golf Outings**—The annual golf tournament at Terry Hills Golf Course in Batavia last June was a success once again. Seventy golfers, both men and women, participated in a fun-filled day of golf. Upon returning to the picnic shelter, the golfers shared a steak dinner and contributed to the prize raffle raising over \$200 for the scholarship fund. Thanks go to chairman Ross Monteleone for over twenty years of service to this endeavor.

(Continued on page 5)

**To: Buffalo Retired Teachers Association Members**

**From: B.R.T.A. Election Committee**

**RE: Nominations of Candidates for 2015-2017 B.R.T.A. Officers**

**In compliance with the Buffalo Retired Teachers Association Bylaws, the Elections Committee has established the following procedures for the nominations of officers:**

## **NOMINATIONS**

Nominations can be made by any active member of the B.R.T.A. Individuals may nominate themselves.

Nominations shall be made on the Nomination Form below.

Nominees will be contacted by the Elections Committee prior to June 1, 2015, to verify their willingness to serve in that position.

**RETURN THE NOMINATION FORM BELOW BY MAY 15, 2015, TO:**

**B.R.T.A. ELECTION COMMITTEE**

**C/O PETER J. RIESTER**

**163 AVA LANE**

**WILLIAMSVILLE, NY 14221-3032**

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## **B.R.T.A. OFFICER NOMINATION FORM**

Active members may nominate candidates for any or all of the positions listed below. Individuals may nominate themselves for any of the positions below.

**PLEASE PRINT ALL INFORMATION REQUESTED ON THIS FORM**

**NOMINATION MADE BY (YOUR NAME):** \_\_\_\_\_ **PHONE NUMBER** \_\_\_\_\_

NOMINEE

HIS/HER PHONE NUMBER

**President** \_\_\_\_\_

**First Vice President** - \_\_\_\_\_

**Second Vice President** \_\_\_\_\_

**Treasurer** \_\_\_\_\_

**Recording Secretary** \_\_\_\_\_

**Corresponding Secretary** \_\_\_\_\_

**Membership Secretary** \_\_\_\_\_

**At Large Members - 3 Positions to be filled**

**1.** \_\_\_\_\_

**2.** \_\_\_\_\_

**3.** \_\_\_\_\_

### Year in Review (continued)

Weekly golf outings to local par three courses in the summer months has proven to be a success as well. Thanks to Mary Agnes Marabella for coordinating golf outings at Bob-O-Link in Orchard Park, Bright Meadows in Akron, Gothic Hills in Lockport, Newfane Par 3 in Newfane, and Oakwood in Amherst. Each week, the group of men and women play for recreation and then have lunch at a local restaurant.

**Card Club**—The third Monday of each month throughout the year finds BRTA members at the Friendly's Ice Cream Restaurant on Maple Road near Sweet Home participating in card games. Pinochle seems to be the game of choice. Thanks to Carolyn Cardarella for coordinating this group.

**Important Things to Remember**—Annual dues are \$12 per year with BRTA's fiscal year beginning September 1. Life membership is \$150 and you are presented with a life membership card once. Only annual members are given renewed annual membership cards.

You belong to the Buffalo Retired Teachers Association which is a unit of Western Zone, New York State Retired Teachers Association. You may also be a member of Retiree Council #44 of NYSUT. More detailed information can be found on the BRTA website: [www.brta.biz](http://www.brta.biz)

—Stephen Parada

### MEDITATION—EVERYTHING OLD IS NEW AGAIN

Meditation: the simplest exercise you will ever do that is the hardest to stick with. It is the new (old) health news buzz for 2015. The following two paragraphs are from the National Institute of Health: National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health (<https://nccih.nih.gov/health/meditation/overview.htm>)

#### What Is Meditation?

There are many types of meditation, but most have four elements in common: a quiet location with as few distractions as possible; a specific, comfortable posture (sitting, lying down, walking, or in other positions); a focus of attention (a specially chosen word or set of words, an object, or the sensations of the breath); and an open attitude (letting distractions come and go naturally without judging them).

#### What do we know about the effectiveness of meditation?

Research suggests that practicing meditation may reduce blood pressure, symptoms of irritable bowel syndrome, anxiety and depression, insomnia, and the incidence, duration, and severity of acute respiratory illnesses (such as influenza). Evidence about its effectiveness for pain and as a smoking-cessation treatment is uncertain.

Although there are many books, articles and classes available to learn Meditation, you can start very simply. The key is to set aside a time every day and just do it! Start with three to five minutes. Set a quiet timer so you don't keep looking at the clock.

Find a quiet place and a comfortable posture. Relax your body and start slow, deep breathing. Be sure to breathe in slowly and deeply and exhale slowly and completely. Concentrate on your breathing and think only of it. When other thoughts intrude, and they will, go back to concentrating on your breathing. That's it!

—JoAnne Meyer

# Buffalo Retired Teachers Association

Cordially Invites Members & Guests to attend

## BRTA Winter Luncheon

To be held at

### The Brookfield Country Club

5141 Shimerville Rd. Clarence, NY

716-632-2500

**Thursday, February 26, 2015**

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

Luncheon: 12:15 pm Choice of:

- 1) Pork Loin with Cherry & Rosemary
- 2) Chicken Marsala with Mushrooms
- 3) Salmon poached with Dill 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, February 17, 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)

Winter Luncheon February 26, 2015

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

Please reserve \_\_\_\_\_ seat(s) for me for the Winter Luncheon.

My Check for \$\_\_\_\_\_ is enclosed

My Choice for Meal is # \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Guest Name \_\_\_\_\_ Meal Choice # \_\_\_\_\_

Guest Name \_\_\_\_\_ Meal Choice # \_\_\_\_\_