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The VOICE

THE OFFICIAL NEWS BULLETIN OF THE TEXAS RETIRED TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

WHO ARE YOU VOTING FOR AND WHY?

By Tim Lee
Executive Director

The Texas Retired Teachers Association (TRTA) is focused on the election season, and our members should be too!

Recently, TRTA provided a series of articles through the *Inside Line* e-newsletter about "Good Voter Health." What constitutes "Good Voter Health?" "Good Voter Health" is a term used to describe an active and informed member of the voting community.

While there are several key factors in exercising your voter muscle, the first is that you **always VOTE!** In Texas, your vote matters more in the Primary Election held in March than the General Election in November.

Many races are decided in the primary elections, but few voters turn out for these spring races. TRTA is here to tell its members that voting in the primary election is more than just important, it is vital!

Need more evidence? In 2014, a primary election seat between two Republican candidates was decided by a mere 92 votes. In this race (HD 115), only 9 percent of registered voters determined the outcome. Because the historical voting data in that district demonstrates a pattern toward Republican representation, the November General Election held little sway on the final result. This election was decided in the March primary.

This is true for the majority of House and Senate districts in Texas. Handfuls of voters are casting ballots that ultimately determine the final outcome.

EARLY VOTING: FEBRUARY 16-FEBRUARY 26!



CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



WHO ARE YOU VOTING FOR AND WHY?

Your power as a voter is amplified in primary elections simply because so many other people

choose not to vote. Occasionally, the candidate from the political party most likely to win the primary election does not represent your ideals. If you are in this situation but you do not want another influential interest group to take away your power in the November general election, consider voting in the OPPOSITE party primary and choosing a candidate you believe may be friendlier to TRTA issues.

TRTA is not suggesting that you disregard your political ideals or that you vote for someone you do not support; however, the primary process offers a choice of candidates, some of whom may support the TRTA legislative agenda. If you think your vote may be better used in this way, this may be a winning strategy for gaining support for TRTA issues during legislative session.

Some members may agree with the likely victorious political party in their area. This does not mean, however, that the party's candidate who won the primary is the person you want representing you on vital TRTA legislative issues.

It is easy to take for granted our favorite candidate's chances of election, but we must remember that when a candidate faces a challenger in the primary, the vote could go either way!

Who Should I Vote For?

Ask yourself the right question: "Who should I vote for, and why?"

TRTA does not endorse candidates for political office. TRTA will not tell you who to vote for, but we will always encourage you to ask questions and choose a candidate that supports the interests of public education retirees and pre-retirees.

Our organization has a reputation for working across party lines to establish strong relationships with legislators for the good of TRS and its 350,000+ retirees. We also know that many groups seek to eliminate our defined benefit retirement plan. Some challengers to elected officials in primary elections are supported by groups that want to do away with our retirement system.

TRTA implores its members to talk to each other and ask the following: Who are you voting for and why?

Your fellow retirees may be the best resource in helping you determine which candidate is more favorable to issues impacting the Teacher Retirement System of Texas (TRS). Now is the time to have these important conversations with each other and to learn more about the candidates!

TALK TO EACH OTHER! Share information! Even though TRTA does not endorse candidates, this does NOT mean that we cannot be involved in political activities. The more you learn from the candidates and from each

other, the better informed you will be on the day you vote!

Attend a local unit meeting to converse with retirees in your area and get feedback about who they are voting for and

why. You should also reach out to candidates in person, by telephone or by email. Do a search on Google to locate your candidate's website and contact information. One way to get immediate information from candidates is to follow them on social media, such as Facebook and Twitter.

You may also check the TRTA website, specifically our *Inside Line* series about Good Voter Health, to find out about closely watched races and other vital election information. Visit www.trta.org/blog.

Addressing Candidates about TRTA's Issues

In 2017, when the 85th Legislature convenes, TRS-Care will once again be on the forefront of TRTA's primary concerns. During the 84th Legislative Session, progress was made quickly to address a shortfall nearing \$1 billion for the program, as Chairman John Otto announced that the House would cover the \$768 million in additional funding needed to sustain TRS-Care for two years.

This news was met with great enthusiasm and hope for the future for the 240,000 retirees who utilize the insurance, all of whom live on fixed incomes and rely upon its stable but modest financial security to survive. Fearing a huge spike in premiums, TRTA members sent in thousands of letters to their State Senators and Representatives emphasizing the necessity and importance of the program. The Legislature agreed.

Despite the great news that the Legislature would support the program for the short term, no plans were made at the time to address the funding mechanism and future budgetary concerns that continue to haunt TRS-Care. By 2017, yet another shortfall will occur, to the tune of \$1.5 billion. Over the next year during the legislative interim, a committee of Senators and Representatives will meet to discuss potential solutions.



WHO ARE YOU VOTING FOR AND WHY?



However, when 2017 arrives, many new legislators will begin their service at the Texas Capitol and be faced with an influx of issues, advocacy groups and lobbyists all vying for their attention.

TRTA and its members must begin the process of educating our political leaders NOW, before the elections occur. Think of every candidate in every Primary Election race as a potential legislator. These are the people who may be making the decisions about whether or not your premiums will increase or your insurance benefits will change.

They need to hear from you – their current or future constituents – about what matters to you and why.

At the end of your email or letter or when you meet them in person, ask your candidates three vital questions:

- Do you support a defined benefit plan for all current and future TRS retirees?
- Do you support providing reasonable, affordable healthcare for TRS retirees?
- What will you do as my legislator to ensure that the TRS fund and TRS-Care are preserved and improved?

Please feel free to report back to TRTA with any responses you receive, both positive and negative. Send an email to info@trta.org with the subject line “Elections.” It is also imperative to share the feedback you receive from candidates with other education retirees.

polls! We will be armed with information, and ready to cast our votes for leaders who will work hard to address these concerns with fairness and absolute dedication to protecting your retirement security!

Without your involvement during the primary election season and going forward, TRS-Care could be in a much more precarious position. We must continue our vigilance!

Early voting begins February 16 and continues through February 26.

Primary election day is March 1. A complete list of candidates can be found on trta.org or ballotpedia.org. Sign up for the *Inside Line* on the TRTA website to receive up-to-the-minute news about the Texas Primary Elections!

Time is short, the clock is ticking! When you decide who you are voting for, tell your fellow retirees when they ask about your preferred candidate one of the following:

1. “The person I am voting for is a friendly incumbent, and they have helped TRTA. That’s more important than what some other interest group is saying about my candidate.”
2. “The person I am voting for is energized to protect defined benefits and support our health care. I know they are going to be helpful if elected, and while I do not have anything to say about the incumbent, I know the challenger is pro-retired teacher.”
3. “The person I am supporting is very energized to help us. Unfortunately, the incumbent is heavily supported by organizations that want to do away with the defined benefit plan and thinks TRS-Care is a drain on the state budget. I am supporting the challenger, who is supported by groups interested in our public schools and helping achieve our TRTA goals.”

Please consider the following questions and how you would answer them:

- ◆ What does my TRS monthly annuity mean to me?
- ◆ How would I be impacted if I lost my defined benefit annuity?
- ◆ Do I receive Social Security income to bolster my monthly annuity?
- ◆ Does my future Senator or Representative understand that 95% of school employees in Texas do not pay into Social Security?
- ◆ Do I want the TRS pension fund to be maintained for all current and future education employees in Texas?
- ◆ Do I utilize the TRS-Care retiree health insurance program?
- ◆ What is my monthly premium?
- ◆ What are my out-of-pocket medical expenses per month?
- ◆ Am I prepared financially to handle any unexpected medical emergencies?
- ◆ Do I feel like I do my part to pay for the existence of the TRS-Care?
- ◆ Do I feel like the state does its part to maintain the insurance program?
- ◆ What would I do if my insurance premiums doubled?
- ◆ Do I want TRS-Care to be available for all of the active teachers who pay into the program once they retire?

Make a Commitment to Vote!

Don’t let anything stop you from voting. Get your friends, family members and fellow retirees to vote as well. Get a commitment from at least 10 people to get out and vote! Ask those 10 people to encourage at least 10 people to get out and vote too.

Make no mistake, it is that important, it matters that much, and it is critical to the TRTA agenda. We have to exercise our voting power.

TRTA members should be known as consistent, persistent, confident voters. When legislators and other organizations hear about our members, they should know we will be at the

Now, consider drafting an email or letter to the candidates in your area using the questions above as a catalyst to explain your needs and concerns about your retirement security.

Not only do the candidates need to hear from you, but you need to know if they are committed to YOUR issues.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

WHAT ELSE CAN I DO TO SUPPORT MY CANDIDATE OF CHOICE?

If you have contacted your candidates already, and determined who your candidate of choice is, your work as a voter may not be done! TRTA encourages its members to participate in the political process as much as possible.

You may be asking yourself, "What can I do to support my candidate?" Consider the following activities as part of your legislative duty over the next few weeks:



VOTING POWER

Make the decision and a commitment to vote! Convince others to make the same decision and commitment!

- Let your friends and colleagues know who you are voting for and why. It will help them make a more informed decision.
- Share all of the information you learn with your unit, and consider how to make voting fun for your members such as developing a group voting event!



VOLUNTEER

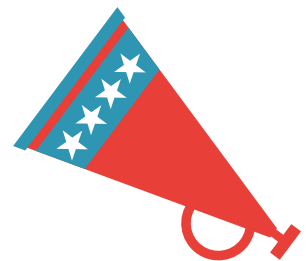
Volunteer to work for the candidate of your choice!

- Call the campaign and ask for a yard sign.
- Give permission to the campaign to put a large campaign sign on your property.
- Volunteer to walk your neighborhood to distribute campaign material for your candidate.

SUPPORT A CANDIDATE

Allow the campaign to use your name as endorsing your candidate.

- Sign up for campaign emails, and pass them on to friends and colleagues.
- "Friend" your candidate on Facebook, and encourage others to do the same.
- Email and telephone your friends and family, and tell them why you support your candidate.
- If you are willing and able, consider making a contribution to your preferred candidate's campaign.
- Ask the campaign for personal endorsement postcards you can use to mail to your friends and family. (Most campaigns are happy to pay for the postage if you will address and sign the cards).
- Write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper and the candidate of your choice about why you support your candidate. The candidate would probably love to use your letter for campaign purposes!



Delegate Information for Districts and Local Units

Names of all convention delegates are due in the TRTA office by March 1, 2016. Local Unit Delegates: Two (2) delegates for the first one hundred (100) TRTA members or fraction thereof; and, one (1) delegate for each additional 100 TRTA members in a Local Unit or fraction thereof. Automatic Delegates: Past TRTA Presidents; Members of the TRTA Board of Directors; Chairmen of the TRTA Standing Committees; District Presidents, First Vice-Presidents, Second Vice-Presidents, Secretaries and Treasurers or alternates appointed by the District Presidents when the elected officers cannot attend.

TO TRTA MEMBERS ACROSS THE STATE

Time is winding down toward another TRTA Convention, bringing us the opportunity to meet and greet one another, fellowship together, conduct the business of the association, and gear ourselves up for another productive year in our local units. I can hardly wait!

On a personal note, this will be a particularly special convention for me as it will mark the end of my ten years of service to TRTA as a state officer.

Those have been ten remarkable years – years during which you have worked tirelessly to defer the movement to abolish our defined benefit annuities; years during which we have seen our Teacher Retirement System of Texas (TRS) fund become actuarially sound; years in which our membership has almost doubled; years in which we have actually seen a bill introduced in the U.S. Congress to address the inequities of the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP); years in which we have owned our state office building outright; and years in which we have made great moves to streamline our reporting and communications.

What a delight it has been to serve as one of your state officers during these amazing years! I want to thank you for the opportunity you have given me to be a part of these exciting milestones for TRTA.

However, the most valued gift of these years has been attending your local and district meetings and counting each of you among my valued friends. I am confident that the TRTA leadership which is in place will move us forward even more.

Thank you for letting me share these years with you.

Maridell Fryar, TRTA Immediate Past President



Nominating Committee Report

The TRTA Nominating Committee, chaired by Immediate Past President Maridell Fryar (District 18), reports that the following members have filed and are eligible candidates for TRTA office for the 2016–2018 association years. The nominees will be elected by the TRTA House of Delegates during the upcoming TRTA Convention in Houston. Other members of the committee include Dr. Martha Jones (District 3), Thalia Matherson (District 10), Jack Teddlie (District 11) and Dr. Charles Thompson (District 8).

Nancy Byler, For President

Currently serving as the 2014–2016 State First Vice–President and State Membership Committee Chairman, and the 2015–2016 Brown County RTA Legislative Committee Chairman. Served as the State Second Vice–President (2012–2014), District 15 Retirement Education Committee Chairman (2012–2014), Brown County RTA Legislative Committee Chairman and Retirement Education Committee Chairman (2012–2013), District Presidents Council Chairman and District 15 President (2011–2012).

Patricia Macias, For First Vice–President

Currently serving as the 2014–2016 State Second Vice–President. Served as the State Member Benefits Committee Chairman (2010–2014), District 2 Member Benefits Committee Chairman (2011–2014), Tri–County RTA President (2011–2012) and Tri–County RTA Member Benefits Committee Chairman (2010–2014).

Leroy DeHaven, For Second Vice–President

Currently serving as the 2014–2016 State Secretary/Treasurer. Served as the District Presidents Council Vice–Chairman (2012–2014), District 2 President (2012–2014), State Legislative Committee (8 years), District 2 Legislative Chairman (8 years). Served as the Corpus Christi Area RTA President (2007–2011) and Legislative Committee Chairman (2007–2016).

Marcy Cann, For State Secretary/Treasurer

Currently serving as the Chairman of the District Presidents Council (2014–2016), State Legislative Committee Member (2009–2016) and District 4 President (2014–2016). Served as the District President (2012–2014), member of the District 4 Legislative Committee (2007–2014), Houston ART First Vice–President (2012–2013), District 4 Legislative Chairman (2010–2013), Houston ART Legislative Chairman (2009–2010), Houston ART Immediate Past President (2008–2009) and Houston ART President (2007–2008).



Nancy Byler



Patricia Macias



Leroy DeHaven



Marcy Cann

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE TRTA BYLAWS

If adopted, the indication of change for each amendment is deleting content by ~~striking through~~ and/or adding content by underlining.
Note: No fiscal impact on the organization will be incurred if these proposed amendments are adopted as currently presented.

Amendment 1

If approved, the word “newly” will be deleted which corrects an error in the bylaws which was created by going to biennial officer elections.

Article V: Divisions
Section 1-Districts #2

Conduct a Spring Leadership Training Conference to train ~~newly~~ elected Local Unit officers and appointed committee chairmen;

Maker: Organizational Affairs Committee (OAC)
Contact Individual: Larry Davis, OAC Chairman
Rationale: Since we went to biennial officer elections, many are not “newly” elected.

OAC Recommends: Approval per our rationale

Board of Directors (BOD) Recommends: Approval
Rationale: BOD agrees with the rationale of the maker.

Amendment 2

If approved, will add the Member Benefits Committee, which was accidentally omitted, to the bylaws for Districts, and will change the total number of committees to compensate for the error.

Article V: Divisions
Section 1-Districts #5

Have a minimum of ~~eight (8)~~ nine (9) committees: Bylaws, Community Volunteer Service, Health Care, Informative and Protective Services, Legislative, Member Benefits, Membership, Public Relations, and Retirement Education.

Maker: Organizational Affairs Committee (OAC)
Contact Individual: Larry Davis, OAC Chairman
Rationale: To add “Member Benefits Committee” to the bylaws for Districts, which was accidentally omitted, and to correct the number count of committees.

OAC Recommends: Approval per our rationale

Board of Directors (BOD) Recommends: Approval
Rationale: BOD agrees with the rationale of the maker.

Amendment 3

If approved, will add the Member Benefits Committee, which was accidentally omitted, to the bylaws for Local Units, and will change the total number of committees to compensate for the error.

Article V: Divisions
Section 2-Local Units #5

Have a minimum of ~~seven (7)~~ eight (8) committees: Community Volunteer Service, Health Care, Informative and Protective Services, Legislative, Member Benefits, Membership, Public Relations, and Retirement Education.

Maker: Organizational Affairs Committee (OAC)
Contact Individual: Larry Davis, OAC Chairman
Rationale: To add “Member Benefits Committee” to the bylaws for Local Units, which was accidentally omitted, and to correct the number count of committees.

OAC Recommends: Approval per our rationale

Board of Directors (BOD) Recommends: Approval
Rationale: BOD agrees with the rationale of the maker.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE TRTA BYLAWS

Amendment 4

If adopted, will change the name of the “Leadership Training Committee” to “Leadership Support Committee.”

Article XI: Committees
Section 1

The standing committees of TRTA shall be Community Volunteer Service, Finance, Health Care, Informative and Protective Services, ~~Leadership Training~~ Leadership Support, Legislative, Local Unit Support, Member Benefits, Membership, Organizational Affairs, Public Relations, and Retirement Education.

Maker: Odessa Retired Teachers/School Personnel Association (District 18)

Contact Individual: Ricky Chandler, Odessa RT/SPA President

Rationale: Since the Leadership Training Committee does not actually train anyone, we felt that this new name more adequately reflects the committee’s responsibilities. This year’s Leadership Training Committee discussed on several occasions the need to change the name and they all agreed at their committee meeting on July 27, 2015 to ask for the name change during the 2016 TRTA State Convention to be held in Houston, TX.

OAC Recommends: Approval

Rationale: OAC agrees with the rationale of the maker.

BOD Recommends: Approval

Rationale: BOD agrees with the rationale of the maker.

Note: If adopted, this name change will need to be made in all other documents of TRTA where the old name of Leadership Training Committee is used.

Amendment 5

If adopted, the Historian will become a voting member of the TRTA Board of Directors and the Board will have eleven eligible voting members.

Article IX: Board of Directors
Section 1

~~The Board of Directors of TRTA shall consist of voting and nonvoting members, as follows:-~~

- ~~1. The voting members shall be the state President, First Vice President, Second Vice President, and Secretary/Treasurer; the Immediate Past President; the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Recorder of the District Presidents Council; the Legislative Coordinator; and the Organizational Affairs Coordinator.~~
- ~~2. The Historian shall serve as a nonvoting member of the Board of Directors.~~

The Board of Directors of TRTA shall consist of the following voting members: the State President, First Vice President, Second Vice President, and Secretary/Treasurer; the Immediate Past State President; the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Recorder of the District Presidents Council; the Legislative Coordinator; the Organizational Affairs Coordinator; and the Historian.

Maker: Midland Association of Retired School Personnel (District 18)

Contact Person: Ann Parish, MARSP President

Rationale: TRTA has the expense for the Historian to attend all TRTA Board Meetings, but the Historian is the only member of the TRTA Board of Directors without voting privileges. Is it because the Historian is appointed? The TRTA President appoints three members of the Board: Historian, Legislative Coordinator, and Organizational Affairs Coordinator. The Historian is the only one of the three to be given the right to sit in on board meetings, have a voice in the discussion, but he or she is denied the right to vote on the issues that are discussed. Is it because the Historian is not elected or approved by the HOD? Neither are the officers of the District Presidents Council, nor the OAC and Legislative Coordinators. Is it because the Historian does not chair a state committee? Neither does the President, nor the officers of the District Presidents Council.

OAC Recommends: Approval

Rationale: OAC agrees with the rationale of the maker

BOD Recommends: Disapproval

Rationale: If adopted, the majority of the voting members of the Board of Directors will not have been directly elected by the House of Delegates.

Hearts of Texas: TRTA Proud!

Join us as TRTA hosts its 63rd Annual Convention “Hearts of Texas: TRTA Proud” April 10-12, 2016 in Houston! Our theme demonstrates the strength and dedication of TRTA’s 257 local units and their homegrown, grassroots advocacy.

The convention will be hosted at the Westin Galleria on 5060 West Alabama. Reservations at our first overflow hotel, the Westin Oaks, and the Westin Galleria are now full.

TRTA has secured a second overflow hotel at the Sheraton Suites Houston (2400 West Loop South). The Sheraton will have a complimentary shuttle to the Galleria along with a special overnight self-parking rate of \$7. You can reserve your room at trta.org or by calling 1.888.321.4733. Ask for the TRTA group rate. The rate is available until March 27.

Registration begins on Sunday, April 10. Diamond Plus participants should bring their red badge holders and wear their pins. There will be a free Welcome Reception at 5:30 p.m., featuring a “Taste of the Mediterranean” buffet. This is a great opportunity to “shop, snack and sip” while you enjoy refreshments and visit exhibits. A cash bar will be available.

There will be a group Stroll in the Mall at 7:15 p.m. There are a variety of restaurants to choose from inside the mall including Daily Grill, Chili’s, and Del Frisco’s Steakhouse for dinner.

Opening Ceremonies start the day on Monday, April 11. This year’s keynote speaker is Suzie Humphreys. TRTA will honor all members who are veterans.

Monday continues with a full afternoon of sessions for convention attendees. Topics include Sam Houston and Texercise. A session about NASA presented by Jerry Woodfill, the former Apollo 11 and 13 Spacecraft Warning System Engineer, will be held. Dr. Kota Reddy, M.D., will discuss his book “Eat This, Lose That.” Susan D. Kaufman,



Dr. Kota Reddy, M.D.



Dr. Martha Jones

manager of the Houston Clayton Library Center for Genealogical Research, and Dr. Martha Jones will give sessions on Genealogy.

The Texas Retired Teachers Foundation (TRTF) will host a luncheon at 12:15 p.m. on April 11,

when members will be able to present gifts in honor or in memory of a loved one, friend or colleague. See page 11 to view the menu.

At 5:30 p.m., attendees can enjoy a Social Hour before the evening’s Awards Dinner. Dinner features a salad, chimichurri-marinated top sirloin steak with mashed potatoes and green beans, and mini red velvet cake and chocolate-dipped strawberry and berries Devonshire for dessert.

On Tuesday, April 12, the Stilwell Retirement Residence will host a breakfast at 7:00 a.m., including scrambled eggs, link sausage, bacon, breakfast potatoes, and pastries. Association business begins promptly at 9:00 a.m. during the First Meeting of the House of Delegates. Delegates will elect association leaders for 2016-2018.

A Legislative Luncheon will be held at 12:15 p.m., featuring a panel of legislators as well as Executive Director Tim Lee. Attendees can enjoy chilled lime-marinated chicken breast and blackened shrimp salad with rolls, coffee, iced tea and chocolate cake for dessert. The Second House of Delegates will begin at 1:30 p.m. and end when association business has concluded.

District 4 is proud to host the TRTA Convention, a dynamic city with

Convention Schedule

SUNDAY, APRIL 10, 2016

11:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Delegate Certification and Registration

11:00 a.m. – 7:30 p.m.

Exhibits

11:00 a.m. – Noon

TRTA Board of Directors Meeting

2:00 – 3:30 p.m.

District Presidents Meeting

3:30 – 5:00 p.m.

Foundation Trustees Meeting

3:30 – 4:30 p.m.

Facilitators Meeting

5:30 – 7:00 p.m.

Welcome Reception

7:15 p.m.

Sunday Stroll in the Mall

MONDAY, APRIL 11, 2016

8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Delegate Certification and Registration

8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Exhibits

8:30 – 10:00 a.m.

Opening Ceremonies

10:15 – 11:00 a.m.

Caucus Meetings for District 1–10

11:15 a.m. – Noon

Caucus Meetings for District 11–20

12:15 – 1:15 p.m.

Foundation Luncheon

1:30 – 5:00 p.m.

1st, 2nd and 3rd Training/Informational Sessions

5:30 – 6:30 p.m.

Social Hour

6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Awards Dinner

TUESDAY, APRIL 12, 2016

7:00 – 8:00 a.m.

Stilwell Breakfast

Delegate Certification and Registration

9:00 a.m. – Noon

House of Delegates

12:15 – 1:15 p.m.

Legislative Luncheon

1:30 p.m. – TBD

House of Delegates

TBD

TRTA Board of Directors

museums, sporting events, theatrical productions and even NASA! There is always something to do in this Southern-hospitality-meets-urban-chic city! See you in '16! ★

CONVENTION REGISTRATION FORM

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: MARCH 18, 2016



REGISTRANT INFORMATION

Last and First Name		TRTA ID	
Address			
City		State	Zip
Phone		Email for Confirmation	
In case of on-site emergency contact		Cell Phone	

CONVENTION INFORMATION

Every convention attendee must register online or by mail. One registrant per form. Please check all boxes that apply. Attendees must pay the \$40 registration fee or \$45 on-site registration (late) fee. Refund requests must be received by April 1, 2016. Refunds will be processed after Convention by April 30, 2016. A \$10 service charge will apply. Register online at www.trta.org or mail completed form and payment to TRTA, Attention: Convention, 313 E. 12th Street, Suite 200, Austin, TX 78701.

SPECIAL EVENTS

<input type="checkbox"/> Registration (Deadline March 18, 2016) \$40 per person	\$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Snack and Shop Reception (Sunday, April 10, 2016 • 5:30–7 p.m.) Complimentary	\$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Foundation Luncheon (Monday, April 11, 2016 • 12:15 p.m.) \$40 per person	\$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Awards Dinner (Monday, April 11, 2016 • 6:30 p.m.) \$55 per person	\$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Stilwell Retirement Breakfast (Tuesday, April 12, 2016 • 7 a.m.) \$30 per person	\$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Legislative Luncheon (Tuesday, April 12, 2016 • 12:15 p.m.) \$40 per person	\$ _____

PAYMENT INFORMATION

A confirmation letter will be emailed/mailed prior to convention.

Check or money order enclosed payable to TRTA

Please charge my credit card

TOTAL REMITTANCE

\$ _____

▼ Credit Card Number

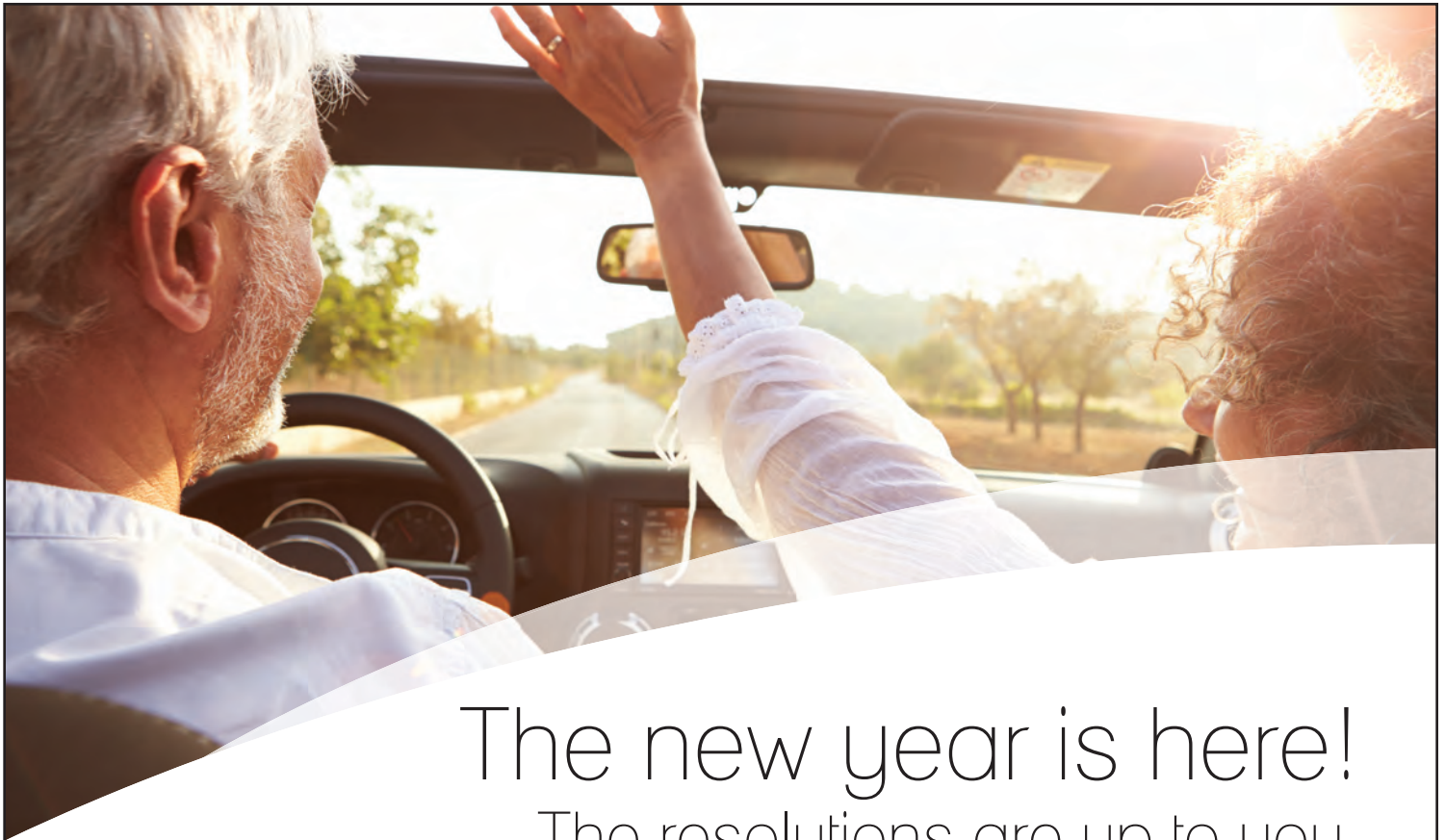
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▼ Expiration

-

▼ Signature



The new year is here!

The resolutions are up to you.

1. Road trip to see the grandkids.

Seeing family in person is even better than that Christmas present you sent! Get deals on hotel, travel, and vacation packages to pull off the best surprise of the year.

2. Take a photography class.

2016 is ready for your creativity! But you'll need to make sure your vision and smile are up-to-date. Your TRTA membership means access to vision and dental benefits to keep your eyes and smile healthy (so you can model, too).

3. Finally build that dream kitchen.

Want to make sure your house is protected? MetLife Auto & Home® policies are available to association members at special group rates. So now you can focus on protecting your investment!

**Make 2016 a great year! Review your benefits
at www.myAMBAbenefits.info/trta
or call 800-258-7041 for
more information.**



OUTLOOK



LEADING POSITIVE CHANGE FOR TEXAS EDUCATION

TRTF CONVENTION PLANS

Luncheon and Training Session Information
11

SCHOLARSHIPS & GRANTS

Applications now available!
11

DONATE TODAY!

Donation card on the back of *The VOICE*
12

TRTF TO HOST LUNCHEON, TRAINING SESSION AT CONVENTION



The Texas Retired Teachers Foundation (TRTF) looks forward to the upcoming 63rd Annual TRTA Convention in Houston, being held April 10-12, 2016.

As in years past, TRTF will host a luncheon on April 11 at 12:15 p.m. The menu features southwestern cobb salad, rolls, coffee and iced tea, and seasonal mixed berries Devonshire served in a champagne glass. Tickets are \$40 per person and may be purchased when you submit your convention registration form (see page 9).

Our 15 Classroom Assistance Grant and 15 Student Scholarship recipients will be announced during the luncheon. The Foundation will also provide an update

for members about our “A Helping Hand” program, the Legacy Campaign and an exciting new charitable venture that will launch in late 2016.

It is common for individuals, districts and local units to present gifts to the Foundation in honor or in memory of someone at the end of the luncheon. If you are attending the luncheon and would like to make a donation, you may complete a form to include a personal message. Forms will be available on your table or in *The Ledger*, our monthly e-newsletter and on the TRTF website (www.trtf.org).

TRTF will host a training session on April 11. It is recommended that Local Unit Foundation Representatives and District Foundation Liaisons make an effort to join the session. Understanding the roles of Foundation Liaisons and Representatives, fundraising and program implementation will be discussed. We hope to see you there!

SCHOLARSHIPS AND GRANTS: APPLY TODAY!

TRTF Student Scholarship and Classroom Assistance Grant applications are now available! Visit trtf.org/scholarships-grants or send an email to help@trtf.org to learn more. Applications are due March 17, 2016.

CONTINUED ON THE BACK



The VOICE

Send address changes to:
Texas Retired Teachers Association
313 E. 12th Street, Suite 200 | Austin, TX 78701-1957
800.880.1650 | www.trta.org

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THANK YOU FOR HELPING US CHANGE LIVES EVERY DAY!

The Texas Retired Teachers Foundation (TRTF) believes that education and educators change lives, every day! The Foundation is able to do just that, thanks to the overwhelming generosity of the members of the Texas Retired Teachers Association (TRTA).

Our members – retired teachers, principals, superintendents, school bus drivers, administrative personnel, cafeteria employees, and more – spent decades nurturing the hearts and minds of millions of Texas school children.

Through the Texas Retired Teachers Foundation (TRTF), our members extend their generosity through donations to causes that have genuine, tangible impacts on the lives of retirees, current classroom teachers and students pursuing degrees in education.

Our members continue to change lives in measurable ways every day by supporting TRTF’s charitable programs: “A Helping Hand,” Classroom Assistance Grants and Student Scholarships. Since 2008, the donations of our members have enabled TRTF to give more than \$207,000 to change the lives of educators of the past, present and future!

Your generosity has unequivocally changed the lives of hundreds of educators of the past, present, and future!

November 2015 was Foundation Month, a time designated by the TRTA Board of Directors to honor the Foundation through local unit programs and an annual appeal. In the 2015 third quarter issue of *The VOICE*, TRTA generously allowed TRTF to use several pages to promote its annual request for donations. **TRTA members have donated \$70,000 to the Foundation’s programs since November 1!**

If you want to donate to a valuable cause that has a direct impact on education in Texas, please consider making a tax-deductible donation to the Texas Retired Teachers Foundation.

You may donate using the card found on the right, or pay by phone using a credit card by calling 1.800.880.1650. Online donations can be made through the Foundation’s website at www.trtf.org/donate.

TEXAS RETIRED TEACHERS FOUNDATION

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