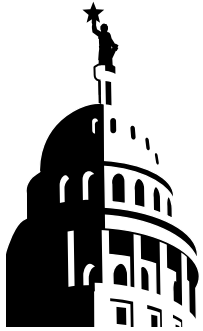


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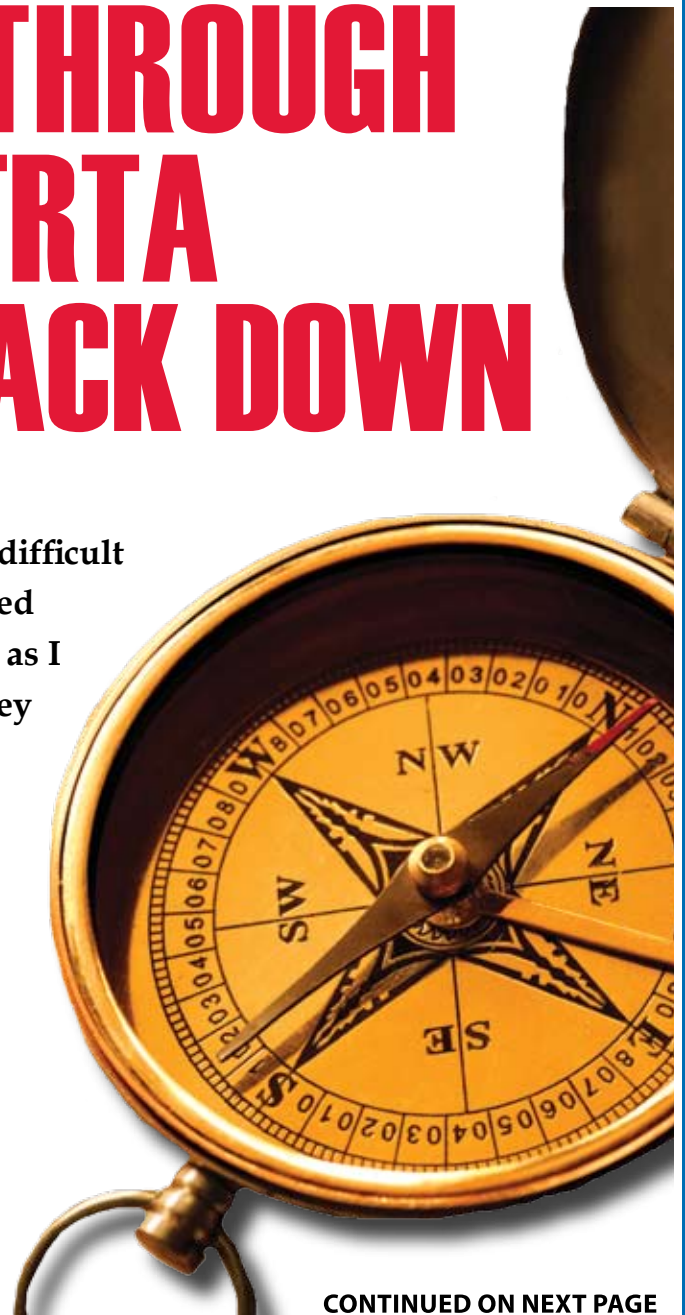
THE OFFICIAL NEWS BULLETIN OF THE TEXAS RETIRED TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

NAVIGATING THROUGH ADVERSITY, TRTA REFUSES TO BACK DOWN

By Tim Lee, Executive Director

It's the end of a long, hot summer following a difficult legislative session. Many of us are disappointed with the way this session ended (though, even as I write this, we have yet to hear from the Attorney General how the supplemental payment issue will turn out). Some are even beginning to wonder if all the hard work over the past few years has been worth all the sacrifice.

This is a dangerous thing. A weakened, less active and less hopeful advocacy organization gives our opponents a distinct advantage. It's easier for lawmakers to diminish pension benefits for future retirees if even current retirees feel too embattled to keep their voices strong. It's easier for legislators to refuse a permanent pension increase for current retirees if those retirees have thrown in the towel. It's easier for politicians to use the TRS pension fund and its investments to advance an agenda that has nothing to do with the best interests of public education employees and retirees when those educators have given up the fight.



CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

NAVIGATING THROUGH ADVERSITY, TRTA REFUSES TO BACK DOWN

These are but a few threats of which we must be mindful... and about which we must be vigilant.

We cannot be naïve. The legislative process will never benefit public education retirees simply because it's the right thing to do. If that were possible, public education retirees would have received permanent increases in their retirement benefits long ago. So, the answer is this: we must stand together, grow together and fight together to get what we need. There is no other way.

This point may seem obvious, but the reasons for spelling it out are simple. TRTA's membership totals have never been higher; however, approximately 75 percent of TRS retirees are not members of TRTA. Also, a small percentage of TRTA members have left over the years because of their disillusionment with the legislative process. Today, these people must be reached.

A larger membership base equals more pressure on the Texas Legislature to pass measures that are favorable for retired public educators. The greater our number of active, educated, vocal, motivated members, the more likely we are to achieve success in the democratic process.

TRTA's membership total in 2009 was just shy of 70,000. The total number of all current TRS retirees exceeds 280,000. We as an organization must have a membership total more reflective of the entire population we represent.

TRTA members walk up the steps to the Capitol to make their voices heard during the 2009 legislative session.



TRTA members are to be congratulated for working so fervently to benefit so many. Now, in the interim between biennial legislative sessions, it is time to educate those other retirees who have been represented by our hard work. We need them now as much as ever. The challenges are growing more difficult and the workload more intense, but with more hands to carry the load, TRTA can truly advance a legislative agenda that is beneficial to all education retirees and employees.

Joining is a matter of knowing

If you ask a fellow public education retiree why she or he may not be a member of TRTA, chances are you'll get a response like, "What's TRTA?" or even, "TRTA... isn't that the group that sends me my pension check?"

Since TRTA is an organization that represents the issues most important to retired education employees, many people do not hear about us until—or even after—retirement. Although the association reaches out to all TRS employees when they retire, some simply ignore the message.

Despite our efforts, TRTA is one of the best-kept secrets in all of Texas. We must work to educate our fellow retirees. Many people joke about receiving their AARP membership card in the mail as soon as they turn an eligible age. Many have joined AARP simply because "that's the thing you do when you turn 50." Imagine if all public education retirees joined TRTA simply because "that's what you do when you become a TRS retiree."

How can we foster this idea in the minds of our potential members? I think the answer is as simple as sharing with our friends and colleagues how beneficial membership can be. The best ambassador TRTA has in the world is *you*.

It is also important to identify TRTA as its own independent organization. We are not an offshoot of an active teacher association. We are not a part of various administrator groups, nor are we affiliated with a national union

or federation. TRTA is an independent organization formed by public education retirees more than 50 years ago, and we welcome every type of retired public educator—teachers, administrators and support personnel—into our ranks. Most importantly, *we answer to no one but our own members*.

We are a dues-paying organization. Our dues revenue comprises the highest percentage of our operations income. We are not an insurance company in disguise, nor do we sell membership lists to the highest bidder. It is our members who support this Association through their annual dues of \$25, and we support them in return. In short, we sustain ourselves and no one else.

"But what is TRTA doing to help me?"

I receive letters from time to time sharing disappointment and dejection from people who spent their entire careers in the public education system and yet are not receiving the support they need from the legislature. It is easy to sink into the conclusion that, after eight years without a pension increase, the process is a mess and no one can help.

Again, this is the exact sentiment some key players in the legislative process want us to buy into. They are hoping our disillusionment will turn into apathy and our apathy will turn into inaction.

TRTA members are the absolute best advocates for public education retirees in the state. No other organization or group of like-minded advocates comes anywhere close to spending the sheer number of hours we do, working to improve your retirement benefits.

As we chronicled in the last VOICE, our members sent more than 45,000 emails to legislators this session; made more than 7,000 phone calls to politicians; and have given immeasurable amounts of their time and resources to support initiatives like TRTA Day at the Capitol this past year. Just last month, we sent more than 4,000 emails to the Attorney General asking him to rule in favor of a supplemental check for TRS retirees. We have the power necessary to rally the tens of thousands of

phone calls, emails, letters, faxes, personal visits, and local meetings necessary to leave a lasting impression on those who would benefit from acknowledging and respecting our strength.

“The legislature isn’t in session again until 2011. Why talk about it now?”

As we speak, opposing forces are lining up against the very ideals and core values for which TRTA stands. The reality is this: there is money to be made for certain individuals if the Teacher Retirement System were to be transitioned away from

or, more to the point, personally stand to profit by selling their advice.

Those who want to move legislative support away from state-funded pension plans also have other motives. Some simply think that government shouldn’t be in the business of providing retirement benefits through systems such as TRS. This, though, is a hollow argument, as every working person is required to pay into a qualified pension plan. Most pay into Social Security, but Texas started a pension fund for its active employees in 1937, and it has grown from \$2 million dollars to more than \$85 billion today. One out of every 20 Texans will receive—or is already receiving—a benefit from this landmark public pension plan.

Though some elected officials may privately dismiss the value of public pension plans and even criticize the tax dollars used to support them, such plans are a successful and integral part of Texas. An item of interest: elected officials also qualify for their own defined benefit public pension plan. We at TRTA have yet to see that plan targeted as seriously as the Teacher Retirement System.

The bottom line

Now is the time to renew your TRTA membership. If you are not a member, please join today. If you were once a member, but thought we could function without you, please renew today. If you received this bulletin from a friend and want to learn more, call us. In an age when nearly everything is automated, real people still answer the phones in our offices. We’d love to talk to you about what we are doing and how you can help.

The truth is, we face many difficult challenges ahead, and we cannot succeed without a dedicated army of TRTA supporters. To those who have been with us and continue to stand tall, thank you! To those considering joining or renewing this association, we need you!

Let’s do all we can over the next year to grow this association as much as possible. Just imagine how legislators would sit up and pay attention when a TRTA representative stands in front of them and says, “I am with the Texas Retired Teachers Association, a group of 100,000 public education retirees.” It’s been said that a picture can be worth a thousand words. I offer this thought:

So can a number. ★

Tell Us Your Story!

Our members are the backbone of TRTA. The retired public educators who comprise our membership base are a diverse group of fascinating people. Here in *The VOICE*, we want to highlight the interesting things the folks in our association are doing in their communities.

If you know of someone in your local unit who is doing something extraordinary to make a positive impact on the world, please send your suggestion to amy@trta.org with as much information as you can gather. Due to space limitations, we may not be able to feature everyone whose name is submitted, but we will reserve a place in each upcoming issue to tell someone’s story and inspire our readers.

“Imagine if all public education retirees joined TRTA simply because ‘that’s what you do when you become a TRS retiree.’”

a defined benefit plan. Money managers all over the state and country would be chomping at the bit to sell their “advice” to our education professionals.

Some say that allowing active educators or future educators “more choice” and “greater control and portability” of their retirement investments would have no bearing on those who have already retired. These phrases are euphemisms, and this argument is incorrect. The people supporting this theory either do not understand how the system works



TEXAS RETIRED TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

INSIDE LINE

Executive Director Tim Lee takes you inside the Capitol.

Sign up for this free email update service at www.trta.org

PRESIDENT'S LINE



2009–2010
TRTA PRESIDENT
Dora Scott–Nichols

Comments/Questions, contact Dora Scott–Nichols
713.465.8912 • dorashn@comcast.net

Hello everyone! Another school year has begun, but we retirees don't need to heed the bell.

The 2009–2010 membership year is also under way. Please reach out to your fellow retirees who have not joined or renewed their membership in TRTA and do it quickly. In this tough economic climate, they could save the cost of membership many times over, if they started utilizing TRTA's membership benefits right now.

In September, we kicked off the latest round of local unit meetings. If you have not already done so, please join a local unit to enjoy fellowship with your peers right there in your own communities. Local membership is a critical part of TRTA's success, and the benefits it provides

to each individual member are priceless.

I am proud to report that we are moving ever closer to our goal of having 100,000 members, a vision set forth by the late Jack Felts, a former TRTA president and good friend. Please help us achieve this goal. Remember : RETAIN, REGAIN, RECRUIT. We need more members to keep our voice strong and help it grow louder as our battles get tougher.

As you know, we represent the interests of retired teachers, but we also count all other kinds of public education retirees among our members, including retired coaches, counselors, nurses, bus drivers, cafeteria employees, superintendents, principals and school board members. Our membership is diverse, but united. We love our state of Texas. In fact, we love it so much that we have spent our lives in service to it.

As I write this, we continue to await the Attorney General's opinion on the supplemental check for our retirees this year. We worked tirelessly this year to make sure the legislature knew we were suffering without a benefit increase, and that a supplemental payment was the least the state could do to ensure some level of well-being among its retired public educators. It is our hope that our Attorney General will not let political pressure cloud his judgment.

I wish all of you a fun and enjoyable fall. Hopefully, Texas will receive some rain and cooler weather. If you need anything related to the Association and wish to speak with me directly, please don't hesitate to call me at 713.465.8912 or 713.305.4302.

Remember, EVERY MEMBER COUNTS!



Participating in the ceremonial presentation were many key TRTA leaders who work tirelessly to protect the TRS pension trust fund and improve benefits for retired public education employees. Mike Lehr, TRTA Executive Director Emeritus, formally presented the picture to TRS Board Chairman Linus Wright. Many TRTA members remember that Director Lehr's leadership was critical to the consumer price index catch-up plan that provided real pension increases for TRS retirees as it was phased in from 1995 through 2001.

Director Lehr commented, "TRS has a remarkable history and a brilliant future. We all have to do our part to keep TRS Texas one of the best pension plans in the country."

Tom and La Vonne Rogers, who have dedicated many years of service to TRTA, were also in attendance at the presentation. La Vonne is a TRTA E.L. Galyean Award recipient (the highest honor TRTA bestows upon its members) and Tom most recently served as co-chair of the TRTA State Legislative Committee, along with Derly Rivera. Bill Barnes, current chairman of the TRTA State Legislative Committee, also helped in the presentation.

Mr. Wright and Mr. Ronnie Jung, Executive Director for the TRS, accepted the picture on behalf of all TRS members and have prominently displayed it in the TRS Board of Trustees meeting room for all guests, members and trustees to see. ★

TRTA Honors TRS Anniversary

TRTA worked tirelessly to protect the TRS trust fund for public education retirees.

The Teacher Retirement System of Texas (TRS) recently celebrated its 71st anniversary. In observance of that occasion, TRTA extracted from our archive a picture of the bill signing ceremony that actually launched TRS more than seven decades ago. We refreshed the photo and framed it for presentation to the TRS Board of Trustees.

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE



2009–2010
TRTA FIRST VP/MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN
Herbert Norris

First, let me express my gratitude and appreciation to those of you who called, sent cards and prayed for me during my time of illness.

I now know my limitations relative to my youthful exuberance.

The first Membership Committee meeting was held on September 8, 2009. If you have suggestions, questions or concerns, please inform me or one of the State Membership Committee members.

The State Membership Committee members for 2009–2010 are Elma Cook (District 12), Jack Lavy (9), Evelyn Kindred (7), LaVonne Rogers (13), and DaNell Wilkins (4). We will do our best to address each and every concern.

Remember our slogan "Each One Bring One;" if we each do our part, we will surpass the (BHAG) big hairy audacious goal of 100,000 members by the year 2010.

There is plenty of work to be done, so please do your part in recruiting new members. An individual incentive award for recruiting new members at the local level has been established.

There is strength in numbers, and together we can do great things for TRTA.

PUBLIC RELATIONS UPDATE



2009–2010
TRTA SECOND VP/PUBLIC
RELATIONS CHAIRMAN
Maridell Fryar

Around the state, districts and Local units are gearing up for another outstanding year for TRTA! Fall conventions have been held or will be in the very near future; most local units have held their first meeting and stories of summer activities have been exchanged. What a great

feeling to fellowship with old friends and greet new members. Thank you all for what you do to promote TRTA.

As you gear up for this year, let me offer some important public relations challenges:

- Set a tangible goal to increase the number of books your unit contributes through the Children's Book Project and work to meet it. How about a 20% increase?
- Plan a major event to present your books and get press coverage for it!
- Plan at least one contact with your local legislator and get press coverage for it.
- Look for opportunities to highlight TRTA information to active teachers in your community.

Remember that TRTA is the voice for public education retirees and that you are the voice for TRTA! Please share your successes with me and the TRTA Public Relations Committee. We want to help you celebrate them.

In Memoriam: Remembering Our Friends

TRTA recently lost four dear friends who gave of their time and energy to serve as state officers and district leaders. We treasure the fond memories they left behind through their many years of service and fellowship. Our thoughts and prayers go out to their families during this time of reflection.

Bob Enos of Austin served as chairman of the Audit Committee. Barbara Hinze served as president of District 20 from her hometown of Kendalia. Dr. Myron Koehler of Bryan, Texas was a former TRTA state president. Roy Pennington served on the Legislative Committee from his home city of Dumas.

These individuals each represented the true spirit of Texas with their big hearts, their dedication and their call to public service. We appreciate their contributions to our association and our community.

They will be truly missed.



THE CONVENTION SECTION

April 13–15, 2010 → Arlington, Texas

In a time when many things are uncertain—the economy, the future of our health care system, the legislature’s support (and, in some cases, lack thereof) on important issues—TRTA is solidifying its approach toward growth and victory where it matters. As such, the theme for the TRTA 57th Annual Convention, to be held April 13–15, 2010 in Arlington, TX, has been set: “The Winning Game Plan.”

Solid strategy has always been a key component of success, but on the heels of the toughest legislative battle we’ve seen in recent years, this Association is preparing now to hit the ground running well in advance of the 2011 session. The 2010 convention will present the perfect opportunity for our membership to come together and study the play book in advance of the big event.

Legislation will not be the sole focus of the week’s activities, however. Membership growth can do nothing but help the Association become a larger and stronger force with which to be reckoned. This year’s convention will deliver myriad topics of interest to the retired educators of Texas and programs to double the organization’s membership and fine-tune our performance on the field.

Building on the overwhelming success of the 2009 convention in Dallas, TRTA promises a series of events that will be informative, insightful, and well-planned to the finest detail.

The Arlington Convention Center will be our home for the week’s events, with accommodations provided at the Sheraton Arlington, which offers free

THE WINNING GAME PLAN

ARLINGTON READIES THE FIELD FOR ACTION AT THE TRTA ANNUAL CONVENTION



shuttle service to and from the airport. Overflow rooms will be provided at the Hilton Arlington, with a complimentary shuttle service. TRTA is providing a private trolley with complimentary service between both hotels and the convention center.

We couldn’t ask for a better city to host such an event. Arlington is home to the mighty Texas Rangers and proudly boasts the brand-new, state-of-the-art Cowboys Stadium, not to mention a rodeo, a motor cross speedway and a horse racing venue. What better place is there to foster a healthy sense of sportsmanship? Through this year’s convention, TRTA members will be given an opportunity to harness that competitive spirit and carry it forward into the months and years ahead, putting it to good use as we fight to make our voices heard and get our concerns resolved.

If you are planning to attend, you may reserve your room and book your transportation now. Be sure to book your arrival for Tuesday, April 13 and check out the morning of Friday, April 16 (hotel information on the right). We look forward to seeing you in Arlington! ❖



SHERATON ARLINGTON

1500 Convention Center Dr. • Arlington, TX 76011
Single & Double \$129 • Triple \$139 • Quad \$149
Room block is open until March 15, 2010.
800.442.7275



HILTON ARLINGTON

2401 East Lamar Boulevard • Arlington, TX 76006
King 1-2 people \$125 • Double 2-4 people \$135
Room block is open until March 25, 2010.
800.445.8667



ARLINGTON CONVENTION CENTER

Reserve your rooms online or by phone. Be sure to mention the “TRTA Annual Convention” for special rates. www.trta.org

TRTA Awards Program

A summary of the TRTA Awards Program is shown below. All awards—both at the District and Local Unit levels—are self-nominated awards and TRTA will honor all nominations. TRTA Awards Program packets will be mailed in December to District and Local Unit Presidents. In order for all awards to be prepared on time, all awards packets must be submitted to the TRTA office no later than February 15, 2010.

The E.L. Galyean Service Award shall be presented when the Board of Directors deems it appropriate to honor a person who exemplifies the qualities of dedication and ability to learn to motivate people toward the improvement of benefits and services for retired school personnel through TRTA. Only one person per year shall receive the E.L. Galyean Service Award (deadline for submission to the TRTA office is January 1, 2010).

District Award	Purpose of Award	Nomination By
Achievement Award	Recognizes district organization and programs; conducted 2 successful meetings with representatives from ALL local units	District President
Golden Apple Award	Recognizes TRTA organizational activities—based on organizing a new local unit or reactivating one or more local units (maximum of 3 awards)	District President
Grand Prix Award	Recognizes exemplary service, projects and/or contributions made in support of or on behalf of a retired teacher association at any level; awarded for total commitment to promoting the progress of education in TX or supporting the best interest of all retired educators—(maximum of 3 awards)	District elected Officers or TRTA Board of Directors
Appreciation Award	Recognizes unusual service at the district level; for service not covered by other awards—(maximum of 3 awards)	District President
School Bell Award	Recognizes news media (newspapers, radio and television stations or respective media staff) for portraying a positive viewpoint on education or educators and who have promoted the interest of retired educators in some exceptional way	District President
Local Unit Award	Purpose of Award	Nomination By
Recognition Awards—Basic, Banner & Bell Ringer	Recognizes local unit organization, programs and achievements (a local unit should apply for only highest award for which it qualifies)	Local Unit President
Membership Retention Awards—Bronze, Silver & Gold	Based on the percentage of retention of last year's membership: Bronze = at least 80% retention, Silver = at least 90% retention, Gold = 100% retention (only 1 award per membership level)	Local Unit President
Special Unit Award	Recognizes promotion of TRTA membership; awarded on % basis	Local Unit President
Silver Star Award	Recognizes TRTA membership recruitment; awarded to a TRTA member who recruits 5 or more new members	Local Unit President
Outstanding Recognition & Achievement Award	Recognizes group contributions to its community and achievements of local units whose members joined together on one or more projects	Local Unit President
Twenty-First Century Award	Recognizes outstanding service; awards given according to number of members in local unit (# of awards based on # of members)	Local Unit President
Appreciation Award	Recognizes unusual service at the local unit level; for service not covered by other awards	Local Unit President
School Bell Award	Recognizes news media (newspapers, radio and television stations or respective media staff) for portraying a positive viewpoint on education or educators & who have promoted the interest of retired school personnel in some exceptional way	Local Unit President or Local Unit Awards Committee
Volunteer Service Award	Recognizes a member of a local unit with the highest volunteer service hours in that local unit	Local Unit President (may only submit one nominee)
Health Care Award	Recognizes a member of a local unit walking the most steps/miles for the Walks-A-Million Program	Local Unit President (may only submit one nominee)



2010-2011: RUNNING FOR TRTA OFFICER POSITIONS

If you are a qualified member interested in running for a TRTA office for the year 2010-2011, please complete the filing form and submit it to the TRTA office (deadline is January 15, 2010). The form can also be downloaded at www.trta.org. In accordance with the TRTA Bylaws, the elected officers of the association shall be President, First Vice-President, Second Vice-President, and Secretary/Treasurer. Below are steps governing the election of TRTA Officers:

Officers of the Organization, Article VII, Section 1.1

TRTA shall have the following statewide officers, who shall be elected or appointed as specified:

1. The officers elected by the House of Delegates shall be the President, First Vice-President, Second Vice-President, and Secretary/ Treasurer. A candidate for any of these offices shall have been a participating member of TRTA and of a Local Unit for at least three (3) years, and shall have served as an elected officer of a District or Local Unit, but need not have served as a statewide officer.

Nominating Committee Guidelines

TRTA Operations Policy

1. The Nominating Committee shall solicit nominations for elections to statewide office in the September and December issues of the TRTA publication. Nominee forms should be requested from the TRTA administrative office and must be completed and returned to that office with photos, postmarked no later than January 15. All nominees meeting the established criteria, as determined by the Nominating Committee, shall be candidates for the respective offices. Biographical data and photos of all candidates shall be published in the February issue of the TRTA publication.

Campaigning for TRTA Office/Position

TRTA Operations Policy

Campaign procedures to be followed by all candidates for TRTA office are:

- Whether announced or unannounced as a candidate for a TRTA office, the campaigning period shall be from February 15 until the date of the election at the annual convention.
- TRTA shall not pay campaign expenses incurred for any candidate.
- Name and address mailing labels of district and local unit presidents, and the Board of Directors, may be provided to TRTA officer candidates upon written request to the Executive Director. A payment of \$25 is required. The request must indicate that the label information will be used only in the campaign for the current office sought.
- A request for mailing labels shall be discussed only with staff and/or officers, and only for the process of providing the labels.

Elections, Article VIII, Section 2

1. The House of Delegates shall elect the officers by secret ballot at the annual TRTA Convention. A majority vote shall elect. If no majority vote is achieved, a run-off election shall be conducted between the two (2) candidates receiving the most votes. If there is only one (1) nominee for an office, a vote for that office may be by voice.

FILING FOR TRTA STATE OFFICE

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Local Unit _____

I am filing for:

☐ TRTA President

☐ TRTA 1st Vice-President

☐ TRTA 2nd Vice-President

☐ TRTA Secretary/Treasurer

I understand that a candidate for this office shall have been a participating member of TRTA and of a Local Unit for at least three (3) years, and shall have served as an elected officer of a District or Local Unit, but need not have served as a statewide officer.

My credentials are:

A postmark of January 15, 2010 is the deadline for TRTA to receive this completed form and a color photo.

Mail to TRTA | 313 E. 12th St., Ste. 200 | Austin, TX 78701



HEALTHCARE CORNER



REMINDER: Get Vaccinated

The World Health Organization has declared an H1N1 flu pandemic, and seasonal flu will soon be upon us as well. Some clinics and mobile units offer vaccines for as little as \$5.00 through Medicare. Check with your doctor for advice on when and what kind of vaccines are available to you.

For more information from the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, visit www.flu.gov.

With the 2010 Census approaching, the federal government has issued tips to help residents stay safe from scams.

The Census Bureau has confirmed that it is NOT conducting the 2010 Census via email or the Internet. You may receive an email from the Bureau regarding your participation in a survey; however, no detailed personal information should ever be requested of you. The Bureau does not send emails requesting PIN codes, passwords, social security numbers or similar access information for credit cards, banks or other financial accounts.

If you receive an email or find a web site that you suspect is falsely representing the Census Bureau:

- ➔ Do not reply or click on any links within the email
- ➔ Do not open any attachments—they may infect your computer
- ➔ Forward the email or url to the Bureau at itsa.fraud.reporting@census.gov
- ➔ After you forward the email to the Bureau, delete the original message

INFORMATION GATHERED FROM WWW.CENSUS.GOV

PROTECT YOURSELF FROM CENSUS SCAMS ONLINE



District Presidents Come Together for Leadership Training in Austin

This July, a special group of TRTA leaders came to Austin for a two-day training to ensure excellence in service for the upcoming year. The audience, comprised of both new and continuing district presidents, broke into three groups for a rotating schedule of specialized leadership sessions. Throughout the event, attendees gained valuable insights on TRTA policies and practices regarding organizational affairs, legislative activities, health care issues, retirement education, community and volunteer services, member benefits, emergency response, and more.

Members of the Board of Directors spoke to the crowd as a whole, updating them on matters relating to public relations, membership and finance. The Texas Retired Teachers Foundation was also represented during the training.

District presidents were urged to spread the word about TRTA's observance of "Foundation Month" throughout November, during which districts and local units are encouraged to raise money for the Foundation's programs benefiting the education community.

Past President Aubrey Cherry conducted a session on parliamentary procedure, and President Dora Scott-Nichols and Executive Director Tim Lee each spoke to the group about the challenges and opportunities lying ahead of the Association. Attendees were inspired by a fellowship dinner, where they were given a chance to get to know one another and share personal perspectives with their fellow officers throughout the state.

Every district president returned home with a newly-minted copy of the 2009–2010 TRTA Leadership Training Manual and plenty of fresh ideas. TRTA extends best wishes to the current district leadership class for a productive, fun and successful year ahead. ★

Pictured above in the bottom row, left to right: Loyce Phillips (District 18), Jill Nelson (17), Dorothy Wasunyk (7), Charlotte Edmons (5), Dottie Gardner (4), Lynda Gottschalk (15), Carolyn Vardeman (12), Lou Jagers (9), Sally Soderstrom (19), Anita Stipnieks (13)
Top row, left to right: Miguel Castillo, Jr. (1), Margaret De Ville (2), Tommie Jo Lindsey (14), Treaca Huston (8), Kenneth Hanson (20), Nola Boughton (6), Charlene McCreight (11), Tonna Duke (10), Dr. Martha Jones (3), Carrol Duncan (16)

OUTLOOK



LEADING POSITIVE CHANGE FOR TEXAS EDUCATION

"A HELPING HAND" LAUNCH

Newest philanthropic program will launch in four districts this fall.

11

THE LEDGER

E-newsletter which features updates and insights about TRTF.

11

NOVEMBER IS FOUNDATION MONTH

Increase awareness of the Foundation; the time to give is now.

12

THE LAUNCH OF "A HELPING HAND"

The Texas Retired Teachers Foundation (TRTF) is pleased to announce that its newest philanthropic program, "A Helping Hand," will launch in four districts this fall. Foundation trustees voted in a special meeting in August to elect the following four districts to serve as "A Helping Hand" pilots: 8, 12, 17, and 20. TRTF is excited and appreciative of their assistance!

"A Helping Hand" provides public education retirees with charitable assistance for a one-time special need or other short-term hardship. Anyone who is receiving or is eligible to receive an annuity from the Teacher Retirement System of Texas may be considered for the program.

As you may have read in the previous VOICE, the TRTF Board of Trustees voted in March to set aside \$10,000 to launch a pilot version of the program. Additionally, the generous gift received from District XII at the 2009 TRTA Convention allotted approximately \$1200 toward "A Helping Hand." TRTF is poised to make the program a huge success with this kind of support!

TRTF has chosen to launch "A Helping Hand" using a pilot format to ensure the program runs smoothly. A pilot program allows TRTF to assess the efficiency of the application process and make adjustments as needed. "A Helping Hand" will be ready to receive applications for assistance in November, coinciding with "Foundation Month."

Training for the initial four districts will be held in Austin at the TRTA office and will include the district presidents as well as foundation liaisons. The training date will be determined soon. Shortly thereafter, a series of teleconferences will train the local unit presidents and Foundation representatives in Districts 8, 12, 17, and 20.

This is an exciting time for the Foundation as it prepares to expand its charitable offerings. TRTF will be able to help retirees in critical need thanks to the generous support of TRTA members!

The Ledger

Recently, TRTF released its first electronic newsletter, which features updates and insights about the Texas Retired Teachers Foundation (TRTF). *The Ledger* opens communication between TRTF board members and the numerous volunteers who assist the Foundation statewide.

The Ledger is sent to district and local unit presidents, as well as district Foundation liaisons and local unit Foundation representatives. **If you are a Foundation liaison or representative and are not receiving the e-newsletter, please contact Cindee Sharp at 800.880.1650 x120 or info@trtf.org and provide her with your email address.** *If you are not a Foundation liaison or representative but would like to receive The Ledger anyway, we will be happy to place you on the distribution list.*

Why an e-newsletter? The email format allows TRTF to save money and better utilize its funds for charitable purposes: providing scholarships for students acquiring degrees in education, grants for Texas classroom teachers, and aid for retired school personnel in critical need.



The **VOICE**

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



The time to give is now.

November is Foundation Month

Designate your fall meeting to increase awareness of the Foundation. We want to do more, and we need your assistance to make our goals a reality.

In 2009–2010, we want to provide ten \$500 scholarships, award ten \$500 classroom assistance grants and launch our newest program, “A Helping Hand,” to give grants to retirees in critical need.

Help your fellow past, present and future educators!
Contact us to learn more on how you may participate.

800.880.1650

Texas Retired Teachers Foundation

313 E. 12th Street, Suite 250, Austin, TX 78701-1956
www.trtf.org | info@trtf.org

TEXAS RETIRED TEACHERS FOUNDATION

OUTLOOK

LEADING POSITIVE CHANGE FOR TEXAS EDUCATION

TEXAS RETIRED TEACHERS FOUNDATION

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Donations are tax deductible. Enclose a check, completed donation card and send to:
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