

Meeting Program and Volunteer Ideas

The following ideas have been compiled to assist you in programming at your local unit and district meetings. Consider some of the following options to engage your members and increase involvement in your community. Contact information is provided should you wish to contact the person who submitted the program idea.

Greeting Prospective Members/Retirees

Invite new and prospective members and retirees to learn about TRTA at the state and local level. Attendees will learn how to get involved locally. Host a luncheon in their honor with a drawing and other door prizes.

Submitted by: Norma Moon of Kingsville Tri-County RTA, District 2
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Historical Places – USS Lexington Museum



Host a field trip to a local historical monument. The first Lexington was named for the Battle of Lexington in 1776. The current aircraft carrier, USS Lexington CV-16 is the 5th ship to carry the name. It is also known as the Blue Ghost. It was commissioned on February 17, 1943 and named in honor of the Lexington CV-2 (known as the Lady Lex) which was sunk in the Coral Sea on May 8, 1942.

The USS Lexington was decommissioned on November 8, 1991. It was awarded to Corpus Christi on January 23, 1991. She arrived in Corpus Christi (North Beach) on June 17, 1992. The USS Lexington Museum on the Bay opened its doors on October 14, 1992. The ship currently has 5 self-guided tours plus special interest guided tours, exhibits, a theater, library, a Simulator, Mess Deck, Gift Shop, Overnight Camping, 3 Escape Rooms and many special events.

Submitted by: Perla Guerrero of San Patricio RTA, District 2
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Estate Planning for Seniors

Guest Speaker: An attorney and a financial planner

Invite a local estate planning attorney and a financial planner to your meeting, preferably ones who work together. They can coordinate an interesting presentation on the importance of estate planning and provide general information on where to begin as well as other tips and tricks.

Submitted by:
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Kids' Meals Houston



Kids' Meals is a Houston organization that began in 2006 to deliver healthy meals to hungry children 5 and under who were not receiving meals at public schools. Their mission is to end childhood hunger by delivering free meals to children most in need.

HART's involvement with Kids' Meals began as a one-time project in 2019 organized by HART president Alford Bleeker. We had a special meeting in January to make and pack over 1000 meals for Houston's hungry children 5

and under. Sometime during the pandemic lockdown, Tom Sanders, HART's treasurer, came up with a wonderful volunteer opportunity for HART members to continue their involvement.

As more schools and daycare centers closed, the need to feed children exploded, and Kids' Meals stepped in to do their part. Tom organized a group of HART members to volunteer every Wednesday to make sandwiches and snacks, pack lunches or decorate bags. A core group of 15 to 18 members showed up every Wednesday, augmented by 10-20 other members.

HART members continue to volunteer every Wednesday, making sandwiches and snacks. We challenge each other to see who can make the most sandwiches during our 2.5-hour volunteer slot. Peanut butter really slows you down, so we try to avoid that whenever possible. Tom continues to head up this project and encourages other members to get involved, either as a regular or an occasional volunteer.

Kids' Meals is the only organization of its kind in the United States. For more information, visit <https://kidsmealsinc.org/>.

Submitted by:

Margaret Preston of Houston ART, District 4
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Fort Bend ISD Officer Snacks

Fort Bend-Harris RE prepared goody bags to the Fort Bend ISD Police Department. Members donated the snacks, put the bags together, printed labels and coordinated the exchange. Police Chief Rider gave each of us an "Above & Beyond Challenge Coin" for our effort!

Submitted by:

Roberta Prater of Fort Bend-Harris Retired Educations, District 4
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Operation Homefront

Guest Speaker: Robin Carter, Senior Director of Operation Homefront

Robin Carter works for Operation Homefront, a national 501(c)(3) nonprofit whose mission is to build strong, stable, and secure military families. Robin's presentations inform communities how they can help veterans and military families obtain housing, groceries, school supplies or assist financially.

Submitted By:

Rachel EGasperson and Linda Carter of Wise County Retired School Personnel, District 11
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Book Review

Guest Speaker: Member of the Community or Author of Book

Members can select a book to read on their own time and come together to discuss. A member of the group can lead the discussion or the author can be invited to attend if they are local.

Submitted By:

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Walker Honey Farm in Rogers, TX



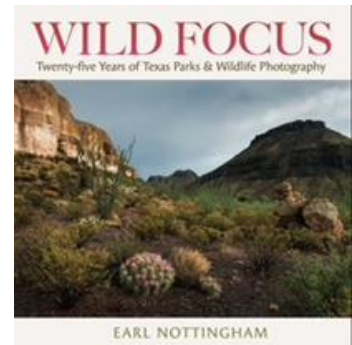
Walker Honey Farm has been a family-owned business since 1930. Walker Honey Farm Store has 15+ varieties of raw honey, our 20+ selections of mead 7 wine, as well as many other specialty products made right on the farm! The Walker Honey Farm Store is open 7 days a week, year-round, except for Easter, Thanksgiving, and Christmas days. It is located at 8060 E US Hwy 190, Rogers, TX, and is a great community treasure!

Submitted by:

Shirley Boyd of Bell County Retired School Employees Association, District 12

Wild Focus by Earl Nottingham

In *Wild Focus*, Earl Nottingham, chief photographer for the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department and its magazine, provides a unique perspective on Texas featuring images of the woods, waters, and wildlife of the Lone Star landscape. Nottingham's engaging photography—landscape, nature, and wildlife; environmental portraiture of people; photojournalistic coverage of events, including natural disasters—provides a cohesive overview of biodiversity and the state of conservation in Texas.



The nearly 200 stunning photographs collected here encompass the expansive mission of TPWD, presenting traditional landscape images from state and national parks as well as from vast private lands. The author logged untold miles and wore through many sets of tires to offer timely stories that would "inform, educate, entertain, and empower" readers about the outdoors. These images that capture the richness and diversity of wild Texas inspire a greater appreciation for the state's beauty and promote a sense of stewardship for its natural treasures."

Submitted by:

Shirley Boyd of Bell County Retired School Employees Association, District 12

iPhone Basics

Like many others, you probably have so many questions about your iPhone but are not sure who to ask (aside from your kids and grandkids). Tom Miller of Abilene, TX has a great program and teaches monthly classes on everything you need to know or want to ask about your iPhone.

Submitted By:

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"A Mochachino Moment" Field Trip

Mochachino Coffee House & Bakery in historic downtown Seminole offers coffees, loose-leaf teas, smoothies and baked goods. The comfy, spacious mingling area is perfect for a reconnecting, rejuvenating officer retreat or "Meet and Greet" with new members! Consider a coffee shop or bakery local to your area.

Submitted by:

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"Maribea Craft Chocolate" Field Trip



Located in Odessa, Maribea's products (chocolate bars, coffee, tea, etc.) are crafted from cacao beans that are carefully sorted, roasted, winnowed, grinded, conched and molded into bars. Owner and operator Mark Merritt demonstrates details how each batch of dark chocolate is processed to release unique aromas and tastes of the cacao beans from various countries. "Pairing with your favorite coffee, wine, liquor or craft beer, the flavors and fragrances complement your chosen drink - an affordable luxury anyone can create to make an ordinary day a special occasion."

Tours can be arranged. Sampling and shopping are always available! Chocolatiers in your area may be available for similar field trips.

Submitted by:

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Holiday Gathering

At a recent holiday gathering, members enjoyed a catered meal, fellowship, a silent auction which benefited our scholarship fund, tables of poinsettias for door prizes, gifts for our local nursing home residents, and the glorious sounds of the Pleasanton Jazz Band. For the Silent Auction, members provide seasonal items which are registered and priced before the meeting. Members are delighted to find "treasures" on the tables.

Local artisans were contacted to donate wreaths or fiber products. All proceeds fund scholarships for high school students in Atascosa and McMullen County.



Submitted by: Sharon Root or Atascosa McMullen Retired School Personnel, District 20
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REHAB! It Works!

Guest Speaker: Tami Fair, Methodist Hospita/Atascosa, Physical Therapy Department

Tami Fair, Physical Therapist at Methodist Hospital/Atascosa, presented a program on rehabilitation services available at the hospital located in Jourdanton, Texas. Tami defined Physical Therapy as health care that "prevents, identifies, corrects, and alleviates prolonged movement dysfunction." She described the different areas on the body where physical therapy could be used, from fine to gross motor movements which may or may not be limited to post surgery recovery. Tami also presented some facts such as "Falls are the leading cause of injury and death in people 65 and older." Staying active and eating right can help prevent falls. Inactivity can cause people to lose 10 – 20% of strength each week. Movement is so very important as we age.

Submitted by: Sharon Root or Atascosa McMullen Retired School Personnel, District 20
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Wreaths Across America

Wreaths are placed on gravesites annually from mid-December to mid-January. Information regarding cost, dates, times and locations are provided. A ceremony with music and speeches can be held at the cemetery pavilion honoring all military branches. Wreaths are placed on designated and general grave sites for the Christmas season.

Submitted by: Helen Hamm or San Antonio Area Retired Teachers Association, District 20
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Getting to Know Community Treasures



Bandera Natural History Museum opened in June 2016. It has indoor and outdoor activities. There are amazing exhibits of art, wildlife and prehistoric life designed to teach and inspire. For example, in the Trail of Habitats there are six dioramas of wildlife, their habits and habitats, fauna and full-mounted animals indicative of the area represented.

The Museum also houses works of art from around the world. The Art Hall with an extraordinary collection of paintings, sculptures, furniture, etc. opened in March 2021. Bandera Natural History Museum is open Wednesday through Sunday and is located at 267 Old San Antonio Highway in Bandera, Texas. It is indeed a community treasure.

Submitted by: Linda Hunter of Bandera County Retired Teachers Association, District 20
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We're Going Back to School – NOT!!!

Guest Speaker: Ann Reynolds, Director of Y. E. S. Center, Ann Buck, Director of CWJC

Consider a brunch for all retirees on the first day of school. Tables can be set up with displays to show new retirees how they can become involved in the community. These tables can showcase the Childrens Book Project, the Y. E. S. Center where volunteers help tutor students on campus, Christ Women's Job Corp, Kerr Connect, and member talents and hobbies (to name a few).

Submitted by:
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Community/Volunteer Service Opportunities

It is so easy to help others and volunteer. You can count up to 12 hours a day helping others helping with tasks for which you are not paid. Studies show that people who help others are healthier, happier people. Record your hours on a calendar or notepad. One of the issues many members report is that they do volunteer, they just forget to keep track of their volunteer activities! Keeping a calendar can be helpful! Here are some ideas to get you started:

Volunteer to read at an area school – Great addition to the Children’s Book Project)

Church Group Projects

Meals on Wheels

Driving and taking elderly to the grocery store or to run errands

Visiting at the nursing home or care facilities

Involvement in your local, district and state TRTA projects

Babysitting

Mentor students at schools or youth club

Serving on committees or boards for altruistic organizations

Coaching city sports

Making quilts or quilt squares for the elderly for homebound

Volunteer at area hospitals (Examples at Scott and White)

- Cancer Treatment Center
- Day surgery
- Emergency
- Hospice
- Mammography
- Information desks
- Intensive care waiting rooms
- Making heart-shaped pillows for heart surgery patients or blankets/quilts for dialysis and cancer patients
- Mended Hearts
- Newspaper and mail delivery to inpatients
- Nursing
- Roney Bone and Joint Institute
- Radiology, ultrasound
- Radiology, diagnostic
- Sunshine Gift Shop and inventory maintenance
- Surgical waiting room

Serve on community organization boards

Volunteer as a docent at local museums

Visit shut-ins

Phone inactive members and shut-ins, visit to see how they are doing and “listen”

Local Outreach: Volunteer to serve meals to residents in your local area

County Fair: Participate as a judge for the food contest, prepare and serve BBQ, serve as announce for the judging

Technology: Assist others with technology, namely cell phones, texting and emails

Tax Preparation: Assist with tax preparation and other legal issues

Food Pantries: Local community or church food pantries

Game Day or Family Night at area church