

In the Loop

May 2022

Message from the President



Dear GRSP:

Welcome to the end of a great year! This is a Public Service Announcement: DO NOT PULL WEEDS. Last Tuesday I was cleaning out a flower bed when I twisted around and my right knee popped. The pain progressed for several days until Sunday morning when I went to the E. R. in Rockwall. I now have a stabilizing knee brace and am using a walker. Bleah!

Your Advisory Board has outdone themselves this year with the many great meetings, luncheons, district awards, book distribution, eight scholarships, and the tremendous fun and fellowship. It has been my honor to serve as your president for three years, and I appreciate your support and kindness in accepting my unconventional style and humor.

You have become my tribe, and I look forward to seeing you each month. Our chapter is poised to continue building on these many successes with the leadership of Ann Poore and her officers and chairpersons. Choose to be involved, and you will be richly rewarded.

Have an enjoyable summer, and I will see you in September.

Peace,
Gail Womack

At our next meeting bring your used jigsaw puzzles for the exchange. Bring what you want to pass on to others and find some new ones for the summer. Also, bring your empty egg cartons for Good Samaritan. We'll get info on summer activities, too!

Mark your calendars for the May 24 GRSP meeting with officer inductions, pre-paid boxed lunches (call Jackie Davis for any questions), and more for our farewell until September!

We meet at the [First United Methodist Church at 801 West Avenue B in Garland.](#)

Doors open at 9:30 a.m.; the meeting begins at 10 a.m.

GRSP Quick Links: be sure to like Garland RSP on Facebook, and ask your friends to like us, too!

[Membership Form](#)

[GRSP Facebook](#)

[Texas Retired Teachers Association](#)



We are also on Twitter! Follow us [@GarlandRSP](#)

2022 Scholarship Winner Spotlight from Scholarship Co-Chairs Anna Meek and Seidy Trent

Thanks to the generosity of the members of this organization, we were able to award three \$1000 scholarships to high school seniors who want to pursue a career in education. Five paraprofessionals who already work for GISD and are studying for full certification were also awarded scholarships of \$500. Special thanks to GRSP members Nancy Peterson, Sandra Dullnig, and Seidy Trent, who spent a morning selecting these winners. Please see scholarship winner details below!

Elena Padilla is a senior at Naaman Forest High School, where she ranks 17th in her class. She plans to attend the University of Texas at Arlington, majoring in Education. Elena is completing a two-year internship at Hickman Elementary in a bilingual 5th grade class and received outstanding letters from her supervising teacher and FTI Coordinator. She is an AP Scholar, a National Hispanic Scholar, and was cited for GISD Academic Excellence. Other activities include National Honor Society and Future Farmers of America. As an FFA officer, she delivered floral designs to the elderly and received a glowing letter of recommendation from Tim Closs, instructor of the outstanding Horticulture program at Naaman. He cited her willingness to volunteer and lead by example, often assisting and mentoring others in the class. She has also assisted with Freshman Orientation and the North Texas Food Bank, Cena en El Barrio. Elena wrote,



“Characteristics that make a teacher effective are being organized, open-minded, and responsible. . .to help students understand what is being taught, while trying to relate to real-life situations.”

Madeline Watkins is a senior at Lakeview Centennial High School, where she ranks 20th in her class, and her transcripts show completed concurrent classes from Dallas College in the Collegiate Program at Lakeview. She plans to attend Stephen F. Austin State University, majoring in Theatre Education. Madeline has an All-Star Cast Award in Texas UIL One Act Play; she has participated in Musical Theatre and serves as Theatre President. She is also an active member of the First United Methodist Church Garland’s Youth Choir and Youth Group. She has been a camper, camp counselor, and choreographer at Bridgeport Camp. Madeline has also assisted with Children’s Choir and Vacation Bible School. Kimberly Ingram, FUMC Choir Teacher and owner of Open Heart Musicals, describes Madeline as having done “extensive studio work (both singing and acting). . .one of the most dependable teen helpers we have ever had.” In her essay, Madeline described herself as a four-year-old, seeing *Mary Poppins*: “Those feelings of wonder and joy have never really gone away. . .Going into high school, I knew my calling was to teach other kids about the magic of the theater.”



Sara Dacon is a senior at Garland High School, where she was a Partial International Baccalaureate student and a 2021 National Merit Commended Scholar. She plans to attend University of Houston, majoring in Music Education. Sara is a member of National Honor Society, Spanish National Honor Society, and was a Superintendent’s Scholar in 2019 and 2020. She has also been an Endorsement Candidate for the Academy of Visual and Performing Arts. Sara has received numerous awards in music UIL competitions in vocal music and piano. She achieved a Gold Medalist award from the Texas Music Teachers Association Theory Test. Sara is the current president of the A Cappella Choir, is active in Musical Theater and is student director of the Celebration Chamber Choir.

As an officer of DECA, Sara has served as secretary and is currently Community Service and Fundraising Chair. She has served 60+ hours in community service through her school clubs and church youth group. Her work experience is as a piano instructor, a math and reading tutor, a babysitter, and an independent musician. Sara quoted Maya Angelou, " 'Words mean more than what is set down on paper. It takes the human voice to infuse them with deeper meaning.' Through teaching I hope to use my voice to bring deeper meaning to my world."

Maria Ruiz-Robles has been a secretary in the Office of Innovation at Harris Hill for 8 ½ years. In that capacity, she provides families and students support in school choice as well as in magnet/AVID programs. She is responsible for allocating funds for college students to receive pay for tutoring AVID students. Ms. Ruiz Robles is currently taking 6 hours at Dallas Community College and expects to receive one of the very first Bachelors' Degrees for upcoming teachers, which started last fall. She has already earned an Associate Degree in Early Childhood Education in 2019. As well as working, she is the mother of two boys and hopes to be a model for her children. Her letters of recommendation include phrases like "deserving", "a hard worker", "determined and zealous at anything she does". Maria wrote, "I have always had a passion for children and being here with Garland ISD and helping all these families has increased my passion and perseverance to get into a classroom and give back to the community."



Natalie Johnson is a secretary for Maintenance at the Padgett Building. In addition to working, she is taking 12 hours to achieve a degree in Learning and Technology at Texas A&M Commerce, and expects to graduate in December 2022. She has made the President's Honor Roll, and her professors describe her as "academically smart and motivated" and "a lifetime learner". Ms. Johnson is a single mother of two children in GISD, one who is graduating this year and also entering the workforce and school. She has been an active volunteer at her church, in the children's ministry, adoption ministry, and in a program called Embrace Grace, designed to support, counsel, and provide physical assistance to young women facing unplanned pregnancy. She wrote, "Community service has been a great way to put my servant's heart to work, and I have taught this to my children as well."

Rana W. Stamm is a paraprofessional in the Alternative Learning Environment at Lakeview Centennial and has 15 years experience. Ms. Stamm already holds a Master's Degree in Political Economy from the University of Texas at Dallas, and a Bachelor's Degree in Political Science. She had planned to become an attorney. However, when her son was born with a disability, she had to change her plans in order to raise her son. When her husband died of cancer more than 15 years ago, she had to go back to work. She still spends a great deal of time with her son, and they both volunteer at her church and local animal shelter. Ms. Stamm is currently enrolled in iTeach Texas, in order to acquire her teaching certificate in Special Education. She wrote, "Besides choosing Special Education because of my son, this field also gives me the chance to positively impact the lives of other children who have similar disabilities and/or developmental delays."



Magdalena Reyes-Lopez is the English Language Learners aide at Beaver Technology Center for Math and Science, and she wants to become a bilingual teacher. She is only 22 years old, but just completed her last three required classes at Dallas College to obtain her Associate of Arts in Teaching EC-6. She is currently enrolled in 9 hours towards her Bachelor of Applied Science in Early Childhood Education and Teaching. Ms. Reyes-Lopez also works at a daycare center as a gym teacher during the summer and school breaks to pay for college and necessities and gain experience with children. She wrote, ". . .I myself understand the struggles of being a first generation student. Being a minority that comes from a low-income household, with parents that speak little to no English allows me to relate to many students. . .I want to provide the support these students and their families need in order to help them excel in their education." Principal Vicki DeVantier describes the applicant as "working side-by-side with all six bilingual teachers. . ."

using lessons prepared by the classroom teachers, but because of her creativity and expertise, she also creates and adds to the lessons." She is also described as always willing to help in any capacity.

Jazmin Vega is an office aide at Rowlett Elementary, and she is currently taking classes at Dallas College, pursuing a degree in Early Childhood Education. Ms. Vega's educational path has been long and slow because of financial and family health issues. She has only been able to take a few classes at a time because her family has depended upon her for physical and financial assistance. But she has kept steadily adding classes, in addition to working. Rowlett Elementary Principal Kim Bain wrote, "She is an asset to our staff because of her composure, her efficiency, and her organizational skills. Jazmin is punctual and goal-oriented. . . She is also a delight to work with." Ms. Vega believes that the scholarship would enable her to get closer to her goal of getting her degree and into a classroom. "I will show students that there is so much to look forward to in the world of learning. I want to teach to inspire, motivate, and love."



Congratulations to all our scholarship winners and much gratitude to our members for helping make their dreams come true!

Legislative Update

Thomas Poore, Legislative Chair

The May legislative update is the [History of Benefit Changes](#) summary chart seen below from the Teacher Retirement System of Texas. This chart clearly shows why retired public school employees need a meaningful Cost-of-Living-Adjustment (COLA). This information will be useful in discussing a COLA with your state senator and state representative.

COMMITTEE TRAINING LEGISLATIVE

HISTORY OF BENEFIT CHANGES SUMMARY CHART

YEAR OF RETIREMENT	COST-OF-LIVING % INCREASE	SOCIAL SECURITY COLAS	TRS COLAS	YEAR OF RETIREMENT	COST-OF-LIVING % INCREASE	SOCIAL SECURITY COLAS	TRS COLAS
1980	238.4	14.3	6-13%	2001	57.5	2.6	10.77% (6% CPI + 4.5% multiplier 2.3)
1981	203.7	11.2		2002	55	1.4	
1982	188.9	7.4	2-21%	2003	51.5	2.1	
1983	179.9	3.5		2004	47.6	2.7	
1984	168.3	3.5	3-9.5%	2005	42.8	4.1	
1985	159.1	3.1		2006	38.3	3.3	
1986	154.4	1.3		2007	34.5	2.3	"13th check"
1987	145.4	4.2	5-20%	2008	29.5	5.8	
1988	135.7	4		2009	30	0	
1989	124.8	4.7	4-16% capped at \$100	2010	27.9	0	
1990	113.3	5.4		2011	23.9	3.6	
1991	104.7	3.7	1% per year of retirement	2012	21.4	1.7	
1992	98.7	3		2013	19.7	1.5	3% capped \$100 hired prior 8/31/2004
1993	92.9	2.6	"catch-up" CPI 25%: 5-15%	2014	19.7	1.7	
1994	88.1	2.8		2015	17.6	0	
1995	82.9	2.6	2nd "catch-up" 2-17%	2016	16.2	0.3	
1996	77.7	2.9		2017	13.7	2	
1997	73.7	2.1	3rd "catch-up" 2-14%	2018	11	2.8	
1998	71	1.3		2019	9.1	1.6	"13th check" capped \$2000
1999	67.3	2.5	4th "catch-up" 2-7% + 10% (2.2 multiplier)	2020	7.7	1.3	
2000	61.9	3.5		2021		5.9	"13th check" capped \$2400

Membership Update

Ann Banks, Membership Chair

Since this is our last meeting until September, I want to remind anyone who has not joined already that your dues must be in by the middle of July if you want your name in the directory. Membership in GRSP is open to anyone, educator or not. We already know that numbers are what make a difference to the Texas Legislature and from the articles lately in the *Dallas Morning News*, not all Legislators are in favor of giving us a COLA. Since most state legislators and their challengers want your vote, now is the time to contact them. Only with numbers and constant contact, will we be able to see that increase.

We received an award last month for our membership growth in our district last year. Thanks to all who helped recruit! However, we are down about one hundred members for this upcoming year. Please remember to join and invite others..

I want to welcome our new members. Some of them may have been members of TRTA but had not joined our local unit until this spring. Make a point to welcome them at our meeting and make sure they do not sit alone. They are:

Robyn Best (Rockwall)
Johnny Beach, (Schrade/GISD Trustee)
Sharon Bradford (Wills Point)
Chuck Britain (Spouse)
Lynne Brown (Harris Hill)
Cindy Broyles (Harris Hill)
Gaylan Burden (Webb)

Paul Cherry (Spouse)
Cassandra Cox (Rowlett HS)
Larry Glick (GISD Trustee)
Brenda Monk (Rowlett HS)
Albert Navarre (Print Services)
Boyd Pace (Print Services)
Jim Thomas (Memorial)

As you can see, not all new members were teachers and not all new members worked in Garland ISD. If our local is this varied, think about how many voices we have at the state level. Please ask your friends to join.

TRTF Update

Kay Ferrell, TRTF Chair

I am thrilled to announce that of the 30 Classroom Assistance Grants awarded by Texas Retired Teachers Foundation this year, 3 of them are from Garland ISD. They are as follows:

Nathaniel Collins is the band teacher for 6th through 12th grade students at Naaman Forest High School. He will expand the band's percussion inventory in anticipation of a 100-150 percent growth in student participation in the program. He will add cymbal and bongo stands, jam blocks, twist shakers, drumsticks, and more to the school's shared collection.

Erika Chairez will operate her Animal Rescue Crew project at Rowlett High School. Her students will learn about appropriate diets for carnivores, herbivores and omnivores, as well as cross-contamination protocols and animal behavior. She will use the funds from TRTF to buy fresh foods such as collard greens, apples, bananas, squash, and grapes and also food items such as insects and pellets.

Erica Ramirez will purchase multiple novel sets in Spanish for her fourth and fifth grade students at Beaver Technology Center. Students will create one-pagers, videos, and other media to demonstrate their impressions of the books, while deepening their comprehension of increasingly complex texts.

Congrats to these state winners and thanks to all our members who donate to TRTF.

Please remember to login to the [TRTA website](#) to take advantage of TRTA member benefits. Dental and vision insurance is available through our partnership with AMBA.

Also available is educators' professional liability insurance with the John A. Barclay Agency. Below are listed some great ways to save on your summer and autumn trips

Travel Benefits

[Avis Rent-A-Car](#) 1.800.331.1212: For personal and/or business rentals, ask for the best rate and mention discount # (AWD) D404600 to receive up to 25% off the rental.

[Budget Rent-A-Car](#) 1.800.527.0700: For personal and/or business rentals in making reservations, ask for the best rate and mention Budget Customer Discount # (BCD) X885500 to receive up to 25% off the rental.

[Enterprise Rent-A-Car](#) • 1.800.736.8227: Enterprise Rent-A-Car is offering 10% discount to members when car is rented from an airport location and 5% discount when car is rented from non-airport location. To receive your discount, mention this code: 65TRTA when you call or go online and enter corporate code: TEX on second page.

Lodging Benefits

[Drury Inn & Suites](#) • 1.800.378.7946: TRTA members receive 5% discount off Drury's corporate rates at the more than 100 Drury Inn & Suites in nineteen states (discounts are not available when hotels are on "peak status"). Amenities include a hot breakfast of scrambled eggs, sausage, biscuits and gravy, Belgian waffles, one hour of free long distance per room per night, evening beverages / snacks from 5:30-7 p.m. and high-speed internet access in every room and wireless lobby. To make reservations, call 1.800.378.7946 and provide Corporate ID #311435 or visit www.druryhotels.com and use Biz Trip Corporate ID #311435.

Healthy Living

Susie Fegraeus, Healthy Living Chair

Common Causes of Balance Problems

Identifying the cause of a balance problem can be complicated. Several disorders have similar symptoms. An infection or inflammation of the inner ear can trigger dizziness and loss of balance. This is called labyrinthitis. The most common cause of dizzy spells is benign paroxysmal positional vertigo or BPPV. BPPV can cause a brief, intense sense of vertigo triggered by certain changes in the position of your head. This spell lasts less than a minute.



A less common cause of balance problems is Ménière's disease. This can cause vertigo, hearing loss, and a ringing or buzzing sensation in the ear. It's not known what causes this condition; however, people living with it often have extra fluid in their inner ear. A sense of balance is needed to stand, walk, bend, drive and more. Balance problems also increase the risk of dangerous falls.

To help prevent falls and other accidents:

- avoid walking in the dark either inside or outside;
- wear low-heeled shoes or walking shoes;
- use a cane or walker;

- add handrails to stairwells and in bathrooms;
- stay physically active to improve your balance and strength;
- discuss with your health care provider whether it's safe for you to drive.

Enjoy the summer, be safe, be healthy, and be happy!

Monthly Budget

Jo Morast, Treasurer

Date: May 1, 2022

GRSP Monthly Treasurer Report May 2022

Budget	Sub-Budget	Total Budget	Spent	Remaining
Meetings	Church Rent	\$ 800.00	\$ 800.00	\$ -
	Social Chairman	\$ 400.00	\$ 108.62	\$ 291.38
	Custodian	\$ 200.00	\$ -	\$ 200.00
	Sep Welcome Back	\$ 1,570.06	\$ 1,570.06	\$ -
	Christmas & May Luncheons	\$ 3,269.94	\$ 2,176.39	\$ 1,093.55
Officers	President	\$ 50.00	\$ -	\$ 50.00
	1st V Pres	\$ 600.00	\$ 301.17	\$ 298.83
	2nd V Pres	\$ 100.00	\$ -	\$ 100.00
	3rd V Pres	\$ 750.00	\$ -	\$ 750.00
	Secretary	\$ 30.00	\$ -	\$ 30.00
	Treasurer	\$ 15.00	\$ -	\$ 15.00
Committees	Sunshine	\$ 40.00	\$ -	\$ 40.00
	Yearbook	\$ 500.00	\$ 390.46	\$ 109.54
	Community Vol	\$ 30.00	\$ 30.00	\$ -
	Historian	\$ 50.00	\$ -	\$ 50.00
	Legislative	\$ 50.00	\$ 16.19	\$ 33.81
	Newsletter	\$ 50.00	\$ -	\$ 50.00
Misc	Memorials	\$ 80.00	\$ 80.00	\$ -
	Convention/Rally	\$ 1,675.00	\$ 1,675.00	\$ -
	Convention Hostessing	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 121.74	\$ 878.26
	PR	\$ 150.00	\$ -	\$ 150.00
	Retirement Ed	\$ 50.00	\$ -	\$ 50.00
	CTC Tour/Lunch	\$ 1,225.00	\$ 1,225.00	\$ -
Non Budget	Scholarship Fund	\$ 7,069.65		(current balance)
	Book Project	\$ 4,909.17		(current balance)
	Yearbook Mailing Fees	\$ 292.80	\$ 216.11	\$ 76.69
	State Dues to TRTA	\$ 6,055.00		(Apr)
Income	Local Dues	\$ 1,988.00		(Apr)
	TRTA District 10	\$ 300.00		
	State Membership Award	\$ 450.00		\$ 450.00
	Contingency Fund	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 363.25	\$ 4,636.75