

Highlights Page

July 2023

- The District Presidents Leadership Conference was held in Pflugerville.
- Standing committees, as well as the Health and Safety Special Committee, met in Austin to update goals and objectives for the coming year.

August 2023

- Texas Secretary of State Jane Nelson announced that the constitutional amendment to provide a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) to TRS retirees on the November General Election ballot in November 2023 would be designated as Proposition 9.

September 2023

- Eligible TRS annuitants over the age of 70 received a supplemental payment in the amount of \$2,400 or \$7,500. Per TRS, approximately 177,000 received a payment of \$7,500 and approximately 108,000 received a payment of \$2,400.
- TRTA, in conjunction with the District Presidents, launched a “Vote FOR Prop 9!” campaign with a Social Media Blitz to help pass the constitutional amendment to fund COLAs for TRS annuitants.
- TRTA Executive Director Tim Lee hosted a series of live Facebook/YouTube events to promote the passage of Prop 9 during the November General Election and to encourage member participation.
- TRTA produced and mailed “push cards” promoting Prop 9 to thousands of TRTA members.
- Congressman Jodey Arrington held a press conference about the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) at a Lubbock fire station to promote his bill, the Equal Treatment of Public Servants Act.
- Districts began hosting their fall conferences across the state.

October 2023

- Districts continued hosting their fall conferences across the state.
- TRTA continued its Prop 9 campaign, and with the help of districts and locals across the state, distributed thousands of “Vote for Prop 9!” yard signs.
- TRTA began a daily series of Inside Line articles to promote early voting in the November General Election.

November 2023

- On November 7, Prop 9 passed overwhelmingly with 84% of the vote, receiving more votes than any of the other 14 constitutional amendments on the ballot.
- The passage of Prop 9 meant Texas voters approved \$3.3 billion in general revenue funds to provide a two to six percent COLA for eligible TRS annuitants.
- TRTF promoted its charitable programs to fundraise for Foundation Month.
- The TRTA Board of Directors held an in-person meeting in Austin.
- The E.L. Galyean Service Award Recipient was named: Elva Garcia, District 2.
- The U.S. House Ways and Means Subcommittee on Social Security held a congressional field hearing in Louisiana to discuss HR 82, the Social Security Fairness Act of 2023. TRTA submitted written testimony for the hearing.

December 2023

- Several lawsuits were filed that challenged the validity of the November 2023 General Election outcomes of the constitutional amendments.
- Due to a fatal flaw in the lawsuits that were filed against these amendments, Governor Greg Abbott proceeded with certifying the election results on December 4, 2023, allowing the implementation of Prop 9 to continue.
- Registration opened for the 69th TRTA Convention in Corpus Christi.

January 2024

- The TRTA Board of Directors held an in-person meeting in Austin.
- At the end January, the COLAs passed as a result of Prop 9 appeared in TRS annuitants’ monthly pensions. Approximately 400,000 annuitants and/or beneficiaries received a COLA. More than 145,000 received the 2% COLA, 187,026 received the 4% COLA, and 67,708 received the 6% COLA. For 280,000 retirees, or 70%, it was the first COLA they had ever received.
- TRTA began a “get out the vote” campaign, encouraging members to vote in the March Primary Election.

February 2024

- The TRTA and TRTF audit reports were approved.

- The TRTF Disaster Relief Fund was activated when the largest wildfire in Texas history began in the Panhandle. Grants to retired and active school personnel impacted by the tragedy were provided.

March 2024

- The Primary Election was held on March 5.
- TRTF announced its 2024-25 First-Year Teacher Scholarship and Classroom Assistance Grant recipients, providing 35 \$1,000 scholarships and 31 \$1,000 grants.

April 2024

- The 69th TRTA Convention was held in Corpus Christi at the American Bank Center, with 740 attendees.
- State Senator Juan “Chuy” Hinojosa presented the flag that flew over the Capitol the day Proposition 9 passed to TRTA.
- New state officers were elected: President, Ella Gauthier; First Vice-President, Frana Patterson; Second Vice-President, Terri Navrkal; and Secretary/Treasurer, Gary Schepf.
- Bylaws were passed during the House of Delegates to rename the State President to President-Elect and the State First Vice-President to Vice-President, effective April 2026. Additionally, the Membership/Volunteer Services Committee was renamed to the Membership/Volunteer Services/Community Involvement Committee at the state, district, and local levels. Finally, a proviso was removed from the bylaws that would have implemented anniversary billing for state membership dues.
- Lieutenant Governor Dan Patrick and State Senator Joan Huffman requested that the TRS Board of Trustees lower premiums for the TRS-Care Medicare Advantage program and create an open enrollment period.
- On April 16, the U.S. House Ways and Means Subcommittee on Social Security held a hearing in Washington, D.C. discussing the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and Government Pension Offset (GPO), the second hearing on the issue within a six-month period. TRTA submitted written testimony for the hearing.
- Districts began hosting their spring conferences across the state.

May 2024

- Districts continued hosting their spring conferences across the state.
- The TRS Board of Trustees decided to move forward with premium reductions for the TRS-Care Medicare Advantage program. The amount of the reductions will be determined in July 2024 and go into effect in January 2025. The Board also approved an open enrollment period set to begin October 1, 2024 and continue through March 31, 2026.

June 2024

- The Board of Directors held retreat in Georgetown.
- The TRTA Board of Directors held an in-person meeting in Austin.

In addition:

- The TRTA BOD met seven times in person and virtually fifteen (15) times since July 2023.
- The VOICE, the TRTA news bulletin, was published four (4) times.
- The rebate of \$3.00 per member was paid in May 2024 to the 20 Districts in the total amount of \$ \$262,800 for the 2023-2024 membership year.
- 111 local chapters received a total of \$13,210, which represented an increase of 1321 members over the previous year. Dues revenue increased by a total of \$46,235 because of these additional numbers.
- TRTA membership as of February 28, 2024 was 97,113 members (at-large members 56,319, local members 40,794). TRTA’s goal is to reach 100,000 members. This coming year’s local membership incentive is The Magic of Membership.
- Contributions by TRTA members for 2023:
 - Contributed 5,233,757 hours of community service, valued at \$175 million.
 - As part of the Children’s Book Project and the Student-to-Student Book Program, 143,791 books were distributed to schools.
- The 2023-2024 “Highest Membership Percentage Gain” was awarded to District 5.
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- The 2023-2024 “Highest Membership Percentage Gain” was awarded to Crosby Area RTA.
- The 2023-2024 “Highest Membership Gain” was awarded to Lubbock South Plains RTA.
- In April 2024, TRTF awarded 35 First-Year Teacher Scholarships in the amount of \$1,000 each. TRTF has awarded \$173,750 in scholarships since 2008.
- In April 2024, TRTF awarded 31 Classroom Assistance Grants in the amount of \$1,000 each. TRTF has awarded \$185,500 in grants since 2008.
- In 2023, TRTF’s charitable program “A Helping Hand” distributed more than \$27,000 to retirees to assist with medical and dental bills, home and auto repairs, and utility bills. Since its inception in 2010, TRTF has awarded over \$300,000 in aid.