

MARSP

www.midlandretireded.org

Newsletter

February, 2011

February 2011
MARSP
Box 4954, Midland, TX 79704



MARSP LUNCHEON MEETING MINUTES

January 6, 2011

The Midland Association of Retired School Personnel met Thursday, January 6, 2011, at the Fellowship Hall of First Baptist Church. President Dorothy Thompson called the meeting to order at 12:37. Leonard Boyd led the members in the invocation and the pledge to the American flag. President Thompson thanked Orin Wade for providing beautiful piano music during the luncheon, thanked Linda Cranfill for the lovely snowmen decorations and door prizes, and welcomed new members.

Martha Kallas introduced the speaker, Johnnye Montgomery, who discussed her role as editor of the book, *Oil Patch Stories and Other Lies: Tales I Heard at My Tool Pusher's Knee*. Martha presented her with a certificate of appreciation acknowledging a contribution to the MARSP scholarship fund in her honor.

Minutes and treasurer's report were filed as presented.

Pat Adams reported a contribution of 1531 books collected and distributed to various charitable organizations for the year 2010. Contributions for 2009 were 1440. We received thank-you notes from the Community Children's Clinic, Fair Haven and Casa De Amigos. Our February 4, 2011 program will be presented by the Master Gardeners.

Diantha Dawkins, scholarship chairperson, reminded members that bags on the tables are for the contributions to the scholarship fund. She encouraged MARSP members to nominate family members for this year's scholarship. She read a thank-you note from last year's recipient, Betsy Rodriguez, who reflected on the role that MARSP had played in her graduation in December, 2010.

Janet Haney reported on the district-wide retirement seminar that will be presented Saturday, February 5, at Abell Junior High School from 9 o'clock until 2 o'clock, with a free lunch. A representative from Teacher Retirement in Austin will present the information to those planning to retire soon. Anyone who would like to volunteer to help with the seminar may contact Janet.

A drawing for volunteer hours was conducted by Nancy Young, and a drawing for walking steps was conducted by Karron Pearson. Free lunch coupons were given to the winners.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:18.

Deanna Dunn, Secretary, January 7, 2011

Valentine's Day History

There are varying opinions as to the origin of Valentine's Day. Some experts state that it originated from St. Valentine, a Roman who was martyred for refusing to give up Christianity. He died on February 14, 269 A.D. Legend also says that he left a farewell note for the jailer's daughter who had become his friend, and signed it "From Your Valentine." Other aspects of the story say that Saint Valentine served as a priest at the temple during the reign of Emperor Claudius. Claudius then had Valentine jailed for defying him. In 496 A. D., Pope Gelasius set aside February 14 to honor St. Valentine.

Gradually, February 14 became the date for exchanging love messages, and St. Valentine became the patron saint of lovers. The date was marked by sending poems and simple gifts such as flowers.

In the United States, Miss Esther Howland is credited with sending the first valentine cards. Commercial valentines were introduced in the 1800's and now the date is very commercialized.

Articles for the Newsletter

Please send MARSP Newsletter articles to Joyce Whitley or Carole Miller, 1210 W. Golf Course Road, 79701 or joyce.whitley@gmail.com.

Please Come to the February Meeting

Don't forget to put Thursday, **February 3**, on your calendar. This is the date for the next meeting of MARSP. The guest speaker will be a member of the Master Gardener Association. Meet and greet begins at 11:30 a.m. followed by lunch at 12:00 noon. The cost is \$5.00, and your reservation is your commitment to pay, even if you cannot attend. The program will begin at 12:30 p.m.

Call Anita Patton at [432-697-1602](tel:432-697-1602) or e-mail her at apatton123@sbcglobal.net by Monday, January 31st.



DRIVING TIPS FOR AN EMERGENCY

Tire Blowout:

- Lift your foot off the gas pedal and don't slam on the brakes or jerk the wheel.
- Steer onto the shoulder as quickly as possible.
- Turn on the hazard flashers.
- If you're not in a place where it's safe to change a flat or if you don't know how to change one, call for help.
- Drive on the bare rim of the wheel to get to a safe place if you must.

Thick fog:

- Drive slowly, use fog lights if you have them, turn on wipers and the defroster to help keep the windshield clear, and carefully look for other cars.
- Use low-beam headlights. High beams can decrease visibility by creating glare that reflects back at you.
- Turn on the hazard flashers.
- Turn off the radio and open the windows to listen to traffic.
- Try to follow the road's edge or center line to ensure that you don't stray from your lane.
- Don't stop in the road. If you must stop, pull off to the side.

Sharon Welch, Informative and Protective Services



By Tim Lee

Go to <http://www.trta.org> and click the Inside Line icon like the one above. Then follow the directions.

Call Your Legislator Hotline:

1-888-674-3788

Legislative Information Hotline:

1-877-880-1651



Children's Book Project

Pat Adams reports that a final count shows MARSP collected 1634 books during 2010. That was almost 200 more books than collected in 2009. Books were taken to Safe Haven, Community Children's Clinic and Memorial Christian Church food bank, where all children who benefited from the bank was given two books to call their own. So far, there have been 300 books donated for the year 2011. How wonderful it would be to beat our 2010 total!! Please bring your books to the monthly luncheons, or call Pat Adams, 697-3339, who would be happy to arrange a pick-up.

Friendship Chairman Keeps in Touch



Patti Watson is the Friendship Chairperson for MARSP. She sends all sort of cards to members, and sometimes non-members, who are ill or grieving, or who just need a friendly note. She sends several cards every month and is always in need of new ones. If you have extra all occasion cards such as sympathy, thinking of you, or get-well, and you don't need them, please get them to Patti. She can also use cards that are blank on the inside. Recently, she has sent "Thanking of You" cards to Harland and Ada Narem and Charles Burbank.

Executive Committee Highlights!!!

- ◆ For state convention, MARSP will be eligible to have 5 delegates. It is April 12, 13, and 14. Six rooms have been reserved at the Grand Hyatt hotel in San Antonio. It is an excellent room price, the hotel is on the river, and it is during Fiesta Week. Members other than the delegates are invited to attend. If you would like to attend, please contact Dorothy Thompson.
- ◆ Mike and Kathy Landrum report that MARSP currently has 366 paid members. If you know a retired school employee who is not a member of MARSP, give the person a call, urge him to come to our next luncheon, and even offer to go by and get him.
- ◆ TRTF Foundation scholarship application is on the back page of **THE VOICE**.
- ◆ Attendance at MARSP luncheons is **NOT** a criteria for joining. We need the support of all retirees, even if they do not choose to attend meetings.



Scholarship News

Diantha Dawkins thanks all members who have donated to the annual MARSP scholarship fund. The current application is on the MARSP website. If you know anyone who meets the criteria, please encourage him/her to apply. The money is given directly to the recipient, either to pay college expenses or living expenses. The most important criteria is that the applicant be working toward a degree in education. The stipend will be awarded in May, so please bring your contribution to the luncheon, or send it to:

Diantha Dawkins
Box 80459
Midland TX 79708

Get Brain Fit at www.happy-neuron.com.

Volunteer Hours—January 2011

Name: _____

Number of Hours: _____

Walking Steps—January 2011

Name: _____

Number of Steps: _____

Job Opportunity for Retired Teachers



Denise Ellis, Agency Manager for Safe Harbor, has contacted MARSP about an immediate need in Midland for observers for court-ordered supervised visitation between biological parents and their children who have been placed in foster care. Workers sit in on the visits and take detailed notes of the interaction between the parents and the children. They then provide those notes to CPS caseworkers in order to help them assess the relationship and make decisions as to what to do that is in the best interest of the children. Most visits take place at CPS offices. Some take place in public like at McDonald's or a park.

Denise notes that "...some of our best workers are retired school teachers who want to earn some extra money working part-time—especially with children."

If you are interested, or know of anyone who might be interested in earning a little extra money by working with children in this capacity, please contact Denise Ellis, and she will send an application and a job description which describes the service in greater detail. Denise can be reached at the following address:

www.Denise@SafeHarborSV.com.



Free Retirement Seminar

Anyone wishing to help with the retirement seminar is asked to come to Abell Junior High School on Friday afternoon at 4:00 to help get informational packets together. The seminar will be held on Saturday, February 5, from 9:00 until 2:00 and will include information about TRS benefits and insurance, financial planning, and legal information. A free lunch will also be provided. If you know people who are thinking of retiring or who have recently retired, please tell them of this very informative seminar. They may contact Andre Clark at (432) 267-5051 as pre-registration is required, so enough folders and lunches can be prepared.



TRTA Benefit Enhancement

TRS Care offers First Diagnosis Cancer Policy and Cancer Treatment Policy, as well as First Diagnosis Heart Attack and First Major Heart Surgery Policy. There are advanced treatments available to increase your chance of cancer survival. However, sometimes these advanced treatments are not available locally, and the cost of travel, care, and other out-of-pocket expenses can be overwhelming. Both first diagnosis plans pay a lump sum payment directly to you upon first diagnosis of cancer or heart attack. Benefit amounts of \$10,000, \$20,000, \$30,000, \$40,000 or \$50,000 may be selected. The treatment policies also pay directly to you.

These policies are underwritten by United Teacher Association Insurance Company. If you are interested, contact TRTA. Call 1-800-258-7041 to get information regarding these policies.



Drink Coffee? Did you know....

that dark-roasted coffee is gentler on the stomach than light-roasted coffee. People who get heartburn or stomach irritation from most coffees often find dark roasts less bothersome. Possible reason: Dark-roasted coffee contains more N-methylpyridium, a compound created in the roasting process that limits stomach acid. So if you are bothered by stomach irritation, you might try switching to a dark roast to see if it helps.

Karron Pearson, Health Care

Veronika Somoza, PhD, professor and chair of the research platform of molecular food science at the University of Vienna and researcher of different coffee blends, presented at a recent meeting of the American Chemical Society.