

MARSP NEWSLETTER

February 2016

MARSP, Box 4594, Midland, TX 79704

**Please come to the February Meeting
February 4, 2016 Program: "Cyber Crimes"
presented by Jim Cox,
Midland Police Department.**

As always, meet and greet will begin at 11:30 with lunch being served at 11:45, followed by the program at 12:15. The cost is \$6 and your reservation is your commitment to pay.

Call **Anita Patton at 432-697-1602**
or e-mail her at **apatton123@sbcglobal.net**
by Monday, February 1, 2016.

If you would like to join us just for the program, a reservation is not needed.

**DEAR MARSP COLLEAGUES,
HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

As school people, we tend to think the New Year starts in late August, not January. But I was happy to see some snow combined with the New Year holiday to take a whole week off from my life. I just curled up in my house and had a mini-vacation. I hope you also had a pleasant start to 2016.

Three things we need to work on this month:

- **The appointment of Josh McGee to the Pensions Board**
- **THE TRTA State Convention**
- **Increasing our membership**

Governor Abbott appointed Mr. Josh McGee to head the Pensions Board. Mr. McGee is the vice-president of the Laura and John Arnold

Foundation, which is committed to eliminating defined benefits (such as the TRS pension plan) in favor of other kinds of retirement plans (such as 401K plans). TRTA Director Tim Lee has expressed our disappointment to Governor Abbott. Tim is asking us to write Governor Abbott and our Senator, Kel Seliger, to express our concern about Mr. McGee's appointment. Please join the

effort by going to www.TRTA.com and click on the inside line or the Legislative Update. Both provide links to letters to Governor Abbott and Senator Seliger.

The TRTA annual convention is in Houston at the Galleria this year. The opening reception is Sunday evening, April 10. We have general sessions and training on Monday, and the House of Delegates meets on Tuesday to conduct the business of the organization. MARSP gets five delegates, and we hope some of our new officer nominees will go. MARSP helps out financially for your convention expenses, but you're on your own in the Galleria! If you want to go, let me know. We have some rooms reserved.

Finally, we always need new members. It is disappointing to me that we have well over a thousand TRS annuitants in Midland County, but we have only 300-400 members in MARSP in any year. It's hard to go to our legislators and say, "We represent all retired school folks, but less than a third of them are willing to support our organization." For \$2.92 a month (Diamond Plus state membership) plus \$15 a year (local membership), a person can be a full member with access to meetings, newsletters, a

wide variety of benefits from pet insurance to computer discounts and FUN! So find a friend and bring 'em in!

Ann Parish, President

MARSP LUNCHEON MEETING MINUTES

December 3, 2015

The regular meeting of the Midland Association of Retired School Personnel was held on December 3, 2015, at 11:30 a.m. at First Baptist Church, President Ann Parish presiding. Maridell Fryar led the invocation and flag salute. President Parish then welcomed all members and guests. She also expressed her thanks to Deanna Dunn for providing table decoration, Orin Wade for his piano music, Anita Patton for taking the lunch reservations, and Mary Smith for assisting in collecting the lunch money.

PROGRAM

Sheila Morrow introduced the guest speaker, Suzy Hitchcock-Hall, owner of Suzy's South Forty. She presented her program called "Suzy's South Forty History." She entertained the members with her memories of teaching dance, her volunteer activities, and how she started her candy business. Sheila then presented Mrs. Hall with a certificate of appreciation.

NEW BUSINESS

President Parish asked members if there were any additions or corrections to the November minutes posted in the Newsletter. The minutes were approved as printed. Members were also asked to review copies of the Treasurer's Report that were on the tables. There were no corrections so the report will be filed for audit.

In the absence of Martha Kallus, President Parish reminded members of all the benefits of the TRT Foundation, including the Helping Hands program and a trial program that provides assistance for beginning teachers and classroom assistant grants. MARSP collected \$1404 in November that will be sent to TRT Foundation in honor of Martha and Dan Kallus.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Members were reminded to give to the scholarship fund. Bags were on each table for collecting donations.

The next MARSP luncheon meeting will be held on January 7, 2016. Linda Buzan announced that Rhonda Carr, a nutritionist will be presenting the program. Mike Landrum stated that there will not be a January Newsletter, just email notice of the meeting.

President Parish announced that the Midland Libraries will be hosting a Christmas open house at the Centennial Library on Tuesday, December 8, from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m., and the downtown Library on Thursday, December 10, from 4:00 to 6:00. There will be refreshments and music provided by the Midland-Odessa Symphony Chamber groups. Members were encouraged to attend. Sheila Morrow thanked members for bringing book donations. Almost 5,000 books have been collected this year.

The Storytelling festival will begin Friday, December 11th. Storytellers will be doing presentation to 4th graders from MISD, private schools, and Greenwood ISD. The festival will continue on Saturday, December 13th, at 10:00 a.m. at First Presbyterian Church. There will be a free concert at 7:30 p.m.

Members were reminded of the Retirement Ed seminar to be held the first Saturday in February at Midland College. Members were also encouraged to subscribe to the *Inside Line* to stay better informed about the attack on the TRS pension fund.

President Parish announced that there will be no board meeting this month. The winners for the volunteer and exercise drawings were Deanna Dunn and Patty Alexander. After wishing members a Merry Christmas, President Parish adjourned the meeting at 1:25 p.m.

MARSP Luncheon Minutes January 7, 2016

The regular meeting of the Midland Association of Retired School Personnel was held on January 7, 2016, at 11:30 a.m. at First Baptist Church, President Ann Parish presiding. After lunch, President Parish called the meeting to order at 12:15 p.m. George Cooper led the invocation and pledge. President Parish then welcomed all members and guests and expressed her thanks to Mike Landrum for taking pictures, Deanna Dunn for the table decoration, Mary Smith for collecting lunch money, Anita Patton for making reservations, and Patti Alexander for name tags.

PROGRAM

Linda Buzan introduced the guest speaker, Rhonda Carr, a registered dietician with MISD and Midland Memorial Hospital. She is also a diabetic trainer. Her program explained how to include more plant-based foods in our diets. She also did two food demonstrations and provided the recipes to members.

NEW BUSINESS

President Parish asked members if there were any additions or corrections to the December minutes. The minutes were approved as printed. Members were asked to review copies of the Treasurer's report that were on the tables. There were no corrections, so the report will be filed for audit.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Members were informed of the following announcements:

- The Retirement Seminar information will be in the upcoming newsletter.
- Pictures of the board will be taken after today's meeting.
- The TRS convention will be held in Houston, April 10-12, 2016. Four rooms have been reserved at this time for delegates.
- Jennifer Cooper, Volunteer Chairperson, asked members to send their volunteer hours to her by the end of January. Karron Pearson, Health

Care Chairperson, asked members to send her a "yes" response if they have exercised this past year.

- Dorothy Thompson, Scholarship Chairperson, informed members of the need to contribute to the scholarship fund. Small bags were on each table for donations. Sheila Morrow announced that MARSP has collected over 5,000 books.
- Winner of the free lunch for Volunteer hours was Deanna Dunn. The winner for Exercise was Patti Watson.
- Nancy Young was announced as the new chairman for the nominating committee. Other members are Karron Pearson and Anita Patton. Members were encouraged to say "Yes" to the committee!
- Current MARSP membership is 327 members.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:07 p.m.

Karen Burden, Secretary

Committee Reports

Virginia Conner/Lois Templeton, Retirement Education Co-chairmen

Texas Retired Teachers Association-District 18 will be hosting their annual seminar for school

personnel contemplating retirement on February 6, 2016 at Midland College at the Carrasco Room from 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. If you know of any school personnel who might benefit from this seminar, they must contact Pam Buckley at 432.425.5078 or pambuckley@suddenlink.net by February 1, 2016 to reserve a slot.

Virginia Conner, Lois Templeton, and Nancy Young from our Midland chapter are a part of the committee assisting in hosting this seminar.

Virginia Conner

Jennifer Cooper, Community Volunteer Service Chairman

Please, please send me your volunteer hours for 2015 by the end of January. Call or text me at 432.238.3736 or email at j.cooper@suddenlink.net. Remember, you can count taking care of those grandkids!

Patti Watson, Friendship Chairman

“Thinking of You” cards sent to
Dorothy Thompson;
Martha and Dan Kallus;
Donna Vaden

“Sympathy” card sent to
Paul Brooks upon the death of his mother;
Donna Vaden upon the death of her mother.

Karron Pearson, Health Care

Turn in to me your “yes” for exercising in 2015!
Email:karronpearson@sbcglobal.net or 699.6360.

To date, researchers have found just one sure way to increase biological life span – eat fewer calories. (Harvard Medical School)

Macular degeneration is the main cause of severe vision loss in older people. Here are six prevention tips: 1) Don't smoke. 2) Wear sunglasses. 3) Eat kale and spinach. 4) Exercise. 5) Eat fish and nuts. 6) Keep your weight down to avoid diabetes. (Harvard Medical School)

Thank-you note to MARSP

Dear MARSP Members:

Dan and I were so pleased you named the contribution to the TRT Foundation in our honor. The Foundation does remarkable work with their projects. All the programs are so worthy of contributions. The trustees are continually evaluating and working to better serve the past, present and future educator of Texas as part of the Texas Retirement System.

The Foundation's goal for contributions this fiscal year is \$100,000. Please continue giving. Another great opportunity is at the convention where local units make contributions at the luncheon.

Thank you again for this honor.
Martha and Dan Kallus

IMPORTANT READ!!

PROPOSED BYLAWS CHANGES

The Nominating Committee(Nancy Young, chair; Anita Patton; and Karron Pearson) have worked diligently to find new people to fill the officer positions for 2016-2018. They will be presenting the full slate to the membership at our February Meeting.

However, the person who has agreed to be President is an Associate Member, and our bylaws state that an Associate Member shall not vote or hold office. Therefore, the Nominating Committee is recommending that we amend our bylaws as follows:

First, delete the last phrase of the last sentence of Article IV, Section 2:

ARTICLE XIII, Section 2—Associate Member

Any person who is interested in education and desires to promote the objectives of the Midland Association of Retired School Personnel and TRTA may become an associate member of MARSP and TRTA upon payment of MARSP and TRTA dues. Associate Members shall have all the rights and

privileges of membership ~~except the right to vote and hold office.~~

Second, since this change would put us out of compliance with TRTA bylaws, we also need to amend Article XIII as follows:

ARTICLE XIII: AMENDMENTS

~~SECTION 1 – AMENDMENTS TO BYLAWS~~

The Bylaws of MARSP may be amended at any general meeting by a two-thirds vote of the members present, provided that notice of the proposed amendment has been sent to the membership in advance.

~~SECTION 2 – COMPLIANCE WITH TRTA BYLAWS~~

~~These Bylaws shall be amended automatically to comply with TRTA Bylaws.~~

Rationale: In order to find a willing president for the 2016-2018 term, the Nominating Committee would like to propose the name of a person who is not a TRS annuitant and therefore is an Associate Member. Since our current bylaws do not allow an Associate Member to vote or hold office, we need to change the bylaws in order to get a President.

Michele Harmon Cobb, Membership

MARSP membership numbers will allow us to take 5 delegates to our state convention in April. We look forward to continuing to grow our membership but that can only be done with each one of you assisting in that endeavor. I hope that you all will consider asking another retired or active TRS member to join our group. Please remind your friends that joining at the state level is only half the battle. We need that extra \$15 yearly for our local dues so that Midland has more of a voice in state matters. Total delegates at state depend on our total numbers; therefore, every additional local member does make a difference.