

# MARSP NEWSLETTER

October 2015

MARSP, Box 4594, Midland, TX 79704



**President Ann Parish presenting flowers to outgoing President Nancy Young and showing appreciation to her for past service to our local chapter.**

*MARSP is the local chapter of retired school personnel representing TRTA that is the voice for public education retirees to lead, work, give, and connect as our only voice in the Texas Legislature. To improve and protect benefits for over 300,000 retirees in the state of Texas is our purpose, so our strength is our membership; please work to build up our numbers in our local group. [www.trta.org](http://www.trta.org) or 1.800.880.1650*

## **Please Come to the October Meeting October 1, 2015**

### **Program: "Library Update"**

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](mailto:apatton123@sbcglobal.net) by Monday, September 28, 2015. If you would like to join us just for the program, a reservation is not needed.

## *PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE*

*Dear MARSP Colleagues,*

*Welcome back to another great year with Retired School Personnel! Sheila and Linda have planned great programs and we have a new plan for our newsletter.*

*Our Executive Director, Tim Lee, will keep us aware of the news on the health-care front. The legislature provided enough funding to keep our health-care plan going for two years, but we are working now to create a long-term funding plan, so we don't have to go into crisis mode again when the legislature meets in 2017.*

*Our District 18 Fall Convention will be on Wednesday, September 30, at ESC 18 (at the airport). Everyone is invited. Lunch is included, so if you want to go, call me at 694-8330 to let me know, so I can include you in the lunch count. Our own MARSP meeting is the next day, October 1, so we'll be busy that week!*

*Respectfully,  
Ann Parish  
MARSP President*

## ⇒ **MARSP LUNCHEON MEETING MINUTES**      **September 3, 2015**

The regular meeting of the Midland Association of Retired School Personnel was held on September 3, 2015, at 11:30 a.m. at First Baptist Church, President Ann Parish presiding. The invocation and flag salute were led by George Cooper. President Parish expressed her thanks to Anita Patton for handling lunch reservations, Orin Wade for providing piano music, and Deanna Dunn for the table decorations. President Parish welcomed all members and guests and introduced state leaders Maridell Fryar, Martha Kallus, and Michelle Cobb.

### PROGRAM:

Sheila Morrow introduced the guest speaker, Dr. Margaret Wade, Dean of Math, Science and Kinesiology at Midland College. Dr. Wade presented her program, Cultural Observations of a Biologist. She shared a slide show and her experiences while attending various festivals in the Mayan villages of Mexico. Sheila then presented Dr. Wade with a certificate of appreciation and informed her that a donation to the MARSP scholarship fund would be made in her honor.

### BUSINESS MEETING:

President Parish asked members to review copies of the May minutes that were on the tables for members to review. There were no additions or corrections, so the minutes were approved as printed.

President Parish introduced Patti Heard, who with Dorothy Baird will be publishing the newsletter. The newsletter will be delivered by email unless members specifically request regular mail. The deadline to request regular mail delivery is today, September 3, 2015.

Copies of the proposed 2015-2016 budget were placed on the tables for members to review. In the absence of Treasurer Mary Smith, President Parish discussed the proposed budget. It was noted that some items, such as ink and mailing supplies, may change because of the change in the number of newsletter mailings. The gift to First Baptist for food and maintenance will double. A motion to accept the budget was made by Maridell Fryar, second by Martha Kallus. The motion carried.

Dorothy Thompson presented the 2015 MARSP Scholarship of \$1500 to Skylar Knight. Skylar, a product of Midland schools, is a senior at UTPB and will be doing her student teaching in the spring before graduating in May. She has worked with the MISD AVID program and hopes to work with junior high students in the future. Dorothy also encouraged members to contribute to the scholarship fund.

### ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Michele Cobb announced that the 2015-2016 membership count stands at 305 and encouraged members to bring new retirees to the luncheons. Members who bring a guest who joins will have their names submitted for a drawing at the convention. Options for joining and paying dues were reviewed. Dues for MARSP are \$50.00 with \$35.00 going to state. If members choose Diamond Plus, the state will deduct its portion from the member's monthly check. President Parish then recognized first-time attendees and new retirees.

Sheila Morrow reported that 3652 books have been donated to the Children's Book Project. She also thanked Mike and Kathy Landrum for their donation of 601 books. Sheila reported that the books have been donated to various places, including High Sky, Midland Need to Read, Genesis Center, day-care centers, and Casa de Amigos. Jennifer Cooper reminded members to keep track of volunteer hours and their exercise for the monthly drawings. The drawings will begin at the October meeting.

President Parish reminded members to make reservations for the October meeting. Then with no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:18 p.m.

Karen Burden, Secretary

# COMMITTEE REPORTS

## ⇒ RESERVATIONS CHAIR:

Anita Patton at 432-697-1602 or by email:  
apatton123@sbcglobal.net  
(Deadline on Monday before Thursday luncheon.)

## ⇒ SCHOLARSHIPS CHAIR:

Dorothy Thompson

Skylar Knight, 2015's MARSP's scholarship recipient carries a 4.00 GPA in the spring 2015 semester at U.T.P.B. In addition, she has substituted for MISD and now is a tutor for AVID at San Jacinto and Goddard Junior Highs. As a single mother who still carries an overall 3.89 GPA, she aspires to teach social studies at the junior high level. Skylar is a senior at U.T.P.B. and will be doing her student teaching this year before graduating in May, 2016. Skylar is, indeed, a deserving recipient for our scholarship. I urge all of you, whether you attend our meetings or not, to send or put into the scholarship bags at meetings your donations to the Scholarship Fund so that we will continue to award this generous scholarship next year. You may also make contributions in honor of persons that you wish to remember in a special way. Our association will send the one you wish to honor or their family a card notifying them of your generous gift. PLEASE HELP!

## ⇒ MARSP MEMBERSHIP CHAIR:

Kerry Kay Cook

As of Sept. 14, 2015, membership is 324 members.

## ⇒ BENEFITS:

Donna Vaden

**The spotlight for October is on Acadian On Call. This company provides medical alert systems and ranks in the top ten medical alert**

**companies in the US. Use code "TRTA" and receive free shipping.  
Phone: 800-259-1234.  
[www.acadianmedicalalerts.com/trta.html](http://www.acadianmedicalalerts.com/trta.html)**

## ⇒ FOUNDATIONS CHAIR:

Gail Wacker

**November 2015 has been designated by the TRTA Board of Directors as Foundation Month. The purpose is to increase awareness of the Foundation, including recent accomplishments and goals for 2016.**

**In 2016, the Foundation's goals include:**

- 1. Award 15 \$500 student scholarships.**
- 2. Award 15 \$500 classroom assistance grants.**
- 3. Award at least \$15,000 in grants from the Area Helping Hands program.**
- 4. Provide \$10,000 to TASA as a sponsor of the Texas Teacher of the Year (TOY) program.**
- 5. Expanding the educational program, the Legacy Campaign, by providing scholarships to active teachers and recognizing public schools, raising awareness of the defined benefit plan and the value of being a member of TRS.**

## ⇒ LEGISLATIVE LIAISON:

Jan Van Eman

The TRTA Legislative Committee is already in the planning stages to address issues between the 2015 session and the 2017 session that affect all retired teachers, not just TRTA members. The Committee will be contacting Senators and Representatives regarding three major issues:

- 1) TRS-Care – The funding approved by the Legislature in the 2015 session will keep benefits and premiums stable for the next two years, but TRTA will need to ask the Legislature for close to \$1 billion in 2017 to keep the program solvent. There is not enough income at the present time to fund TRS-Care due to rising healthcare costs

which includes the dramatic rise in prescription drug prices. TRS-Care is in need of a fundamental change in its funding structure.

- 2) Fighting for a cost of living adjustment – The committee will actively pursue a COLA in 2017 for those TRS annuitants that were not eligible four years ago.
- 3) Protecting the defined benefit plan – TRS was recently attacked by the Texas Public Policy Foundation stating that the defined benefit plans “run contrary to sound budgeting principles that stipulate that taxpayer-funded programs should be predictable, viable and not reliant upon gimmick or market conditions.” TRTA responded with an article in the *Fort Worth Star Telegram* but is well aware of the danger and pitfalls of groups like TPPF who want to strip teachers of their hard-earned benefits. Another major topic of discussion was voter turnout. With increased voter turnout by retired teachers, our influence on policy makers increases. Texas primary elections begin in March 2016. Please stay informed about all these issues. If you know a teacher who is not a member, please encourage them to join. There is power and influence in numbers!!!  
**Call your Legislative Hotline:  
1-877-880-1651  
Legislator Hotline: 1-888-674-3788**

### ⇒ FRIENDSHIP CHAIR:

Patti Watson

***Thinking of you cards:***  
Fran and Ben Dumas  
Lynn and Noah Fishman  
Robert Stewart  
Zoe Carter  
Linda Buzan  
Carole Miller  
Vondel Brinson  
Maridell Fryar  
John Moreland

### ***Sympathy cards:***

Barbara Adams (death of her father)  
Greg and Karron Pearson (death of his mother,  
Billie Louise Pearson)  
***Get Well Soon card:***  
Michele Harmon Cobb.

Please contact Patti at 2697-1170 or [pnw1000@gmail.com](mailto:pnw1000@gmail.com) if you know of someone in our unit who needs a Thinking of You, Sympathy, Get Well, or Congratulations card sent to them.

### ⇒ BYLAWS CHANGE

The MARSP Executive Board recommends a change in our bylaws. The membership will vote on this proposed change at the regular meeting in October:

Beginning in 2014 2016 the officers shall be elected or appointed to serve ~~one year~~ two years ~~or until the successors are elected or appointed.~~

### ⇒ VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

#### **CHAIR:**

Jennifer Cooper

Usher orientation will be Tuesday, September 29, 7-9 pm at Wagner Noel Performing Arts Center. If you might be interested in helping out at concerts and other events, come join us that night. If you have questions, call Emily Charles at 432-552-4440.

### ⇒ TREASURER CHAIR:

Mary Smith

A complete financial report is available at the monthly meeting, or you may contact Mary Smith, Treasurer, concerning the report if you have questions or need information. A proposed budget was presented to the membership at our September meeting and was approved by the membership. One of our biggest expenses will be the awarding of our annual scholarship to a deserving applicant. We sponsor a scholarship of \$1500 annually to a candidate who is

entering the field of education or working on an advanced degree. Remember to bring a few extra dollars to place in the bags on the tables.

⇒ **DECORATIONS CHAIR:**

Deanna Dunn

If any of you have collections that would make interesting table decorations, please contact me so that we can showcase your goodies at one of our meetings. Examples are the quilts of Linda Buzan that we highlighted last year, the turkey collection of Karron Pearson that we use in November, and snowmen collections of several of our members. I have recently heard that one of our members has an angel collection. We hope to involve many of you by revealing one of your passions or interests. Please contact me at 694-1356 or [ddunn44@live.com](mailto:ddunn44@live.com).

⇒ **MEMBERSHIP CHAIR:**

Dr. Michele Harmon Cobb

Join TRTA both state and local to help grow our membership for July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016.

This year, we are continuing the TRTA membership initiative "Each One Bring One," which gives members of TRTA a chance to win \$100!

- A member is eligible for entry in the drawing for each new member recruited to join the state association. A new recruit is defined as a person who has never before joined TRTA or who has not been a member in the past three years.
- All completed "Each One Bring One" recruitment form must be submitted to the local unit first vice-president/membership (Michele Harmon Cobb) chairman by February, 2016.

⇒ **HEALTH CHAIR:**

Karron Pearson

Your morning espresso may do more than jump-start your day; it could also lower your diabetes risk, according to a recent study in *Diabetologia*. After examining the coffee habits of 123,733 people over a four-year period, researchers found that those who upped their daily java intake by more than one cup over their usual amount had an 11 percent lower risk of developing type 2 diabetes. On the contrary, people who decreased their coffee consumption showed a 17 percent higher risk.

2014, September. delicious [living.com](http://living.com)

MD Anderson's Women & Men's Screenings found at <http://www.mdanderson.org/publications/focused-on-health/issues/>

... **Reminder! Reminder!** ...

**CALL ANITA PATTON AT 432-697-1602 OR EMAIL TO [apatton123@sbcglobal.net](mailto:apatton123@sbcglobal.net) FOR RESERVATIONS.**

**Reservations no later than Sept. 29<sup>th</sup>.**

**... Payment Made At The Door ...**

***Editors: Dorothy Baird and Patti Heard***

⇒ **YEARBOOK NOTICE:**

**If you have not paid your dues, SEND them to MARSP, Box 4954, Midland, TX 79704. Dues must be paid by September 25, 2015 for you to be included in our upcoming yearbook. If you have questions about your dues, call or write Michele Cobb (352-0717), [micheleharmon1@gmail.com](mailto:micheleharmon1@gmail.com) or Kerry Kay Cook (694-9930), [kerrykc@att.net](mailto:kerrykc@att.net). Don't let our influence diminish because you forgot to join!**