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**NDRTA** - North Dakota Retired Teachers Association

**NDRTA** - Is the voice of Retired Teachers in North Dakota!

**NDRTA** - Is the only organization that works exclusively for North Dakota's 5,000 plus Retired teachers.

**NDRTA** - Purpose is to promote the personal, social and economic welfare of its members, promote participation of retirees in service to their communities and to promote improvement of education for children in North Dakota.

## Legislative Call to Action!

### Ken Tupa, NDRTA Association Executive

With the Legislative Session in full swing, retired teachers have particular interest in two bills that are a result of the NDRTA legislative initiative that began two years ago. As we all know, retired teachers in ND have not had an annuity increase since 2001-02.

Governor Hoeven included \$5 million in the 2009-11 proposed budget to provide a supplemental payment for retired teachers. Senator Dave O'Connell has introduced a legislative bill to provide the formula for how this money is to be allocated. The \$5 million funding is part of the Retirement and Investment Office budget, HB 1022. The formula for allocating the funding is in SB 2277 (see page 2 to determine your supplemental payment).

### Contact your legislators today! Talking points:

- **Retired teachers have not had a cost of living adjustment since 2001-02**
- **Vote YES on HB 1022 and the \$5.4 million funding to provide a “one-time” supplemental payment to retired teachers**
- **Vote YES on SB 2277. SB 2277 is the formula to provide the supplemental payment based on years of service credit and years retired**
- **Personalize your message and feel free to include your own personal story about a need for a cost of living adjustment**

Find your legislators' email addresses at:

Senate: [www.legis.nd.gov/assembly/61-2009/senate/members/](http://www.legis.nd.gov/assembly/61-2009/senate/members/)

House: [www.legis.nd.gov/assembly/61-2009/house/members/](http://www.legis.nd.gov/assembly/61-2009/house/members/)

Or call the Capitol and leave a message for your legislator at:

1-888-NDLEGIS (635-3447) or 701-328-3373 (local).

Initially, we sought two supplemental payments: one in 2009 and another in 2010 at a cost of nearly \$11 million. As we have been working with legislative committees, and with many other funding priorities in the state to be addressed, the ability to fund two payments became a challenge, and therefore SB 2277 was introduced to build on the \$5 million in the Governor's budget and provide one payment in 2009. The funding for this payment would come from general fund dollars (funds from the budget surplus projected at more than \$1 billion).

We are fortunate for the inclusion of the \$5 million in the budget, however to make one full payment in 2009 with the formula provided in SB 2277, we are requesting an additional \$425,000 (\$400,000 additional for the supplemental payment to retired teachers, and up to \$25,000 to TFFR for administrative costs to make the payments to retirees).

HB 1022 was heard in committee on January 14, 2009. NDRTA testified supporting the \$5 million and requesting consideration of the additional \$400,000. SB 2277 will be heard in the Senate Government and Veterans Affairs Committee on January 29, 2009. As you read this update, the Legislature will be considering both of these bills. The process moves quickly and we have been communicating regularly with your local unit presidents to encourage attendance at the hearings and email, phone calls, and letters to your legislators. **Please contact your legislators today!!**

#### How to Determine your Supplemental Payment as provided in SB 2277:

- Determine your years of service credit and multiply by \$24
- Determine the number of years you have been retired and multiply by \$18
- Add the two together, this would be your supplemental payment, subject to the limit of the greater of 10% of your annual annuity or \$750. (\*note – this limit is not a minimum, rather your supplemental payment cannot exceed the greater of these two amounts. In some cases, supplemental payments may be lower than \$750)

- The supplemental payment would be a one-time payment, made by TFFR in December, 2009
- Contact NDRTA with any questions 701-221-7766, or rta@aptnd.com

**Example: Teacher A, has 20 years of service credit and has been retired for 10 years. Teacher A's retirement annuity from TFFR is \$1000 a month.**

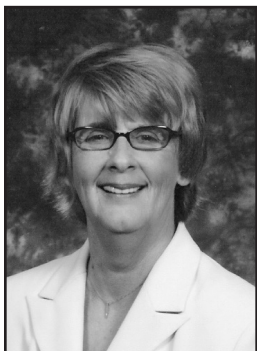
**\$24 X 20 (years of service credit) = \$480  
\$480.00**

**plus**

**\$18 X 10 (years retired) = \$180  
\$180.00**

**Total Calculated Supplemental Payment  
\$660.00**

**Now apply the limit test: Annual annuity may not exceed the greater of 10% of Teacher A's annual annuity (10% of \$12,000 is \$1200), or \$750.**



**Margaret Woodward**  
*NDRTA President*

## NDRTA Presidents Message

Dear Members,

Happy New Year! May 2009 bring you happiness, health and wealth.

Speaking of wealth, as most of you know, we have been included in the Governor's budget for 5 million dollars. This is less than half of what we asked for as a 13th check.

The question now is do we accept this amount or do we gather our members and talk to our legislators in raising this amount. It is nice to be recognized by the Governor, but at this time, will 5 million dollars catch us up to the rising cost of living?

I am asking for you to join me in Bismarck at the Capitol the day our Bill 109 comes up for discussion and a vote. The bus trip will not happen, but we can car pool and with gas prices dropping, this can be feasible.

I spent almost a week in Washington, DC attending the national conferences of NRTA and AARP. The experience of attending a national conference gave me excellent information and commitment to better our organization. I would say energy but after Lowell's suggestion to walk to the National Cathedral for Sunday Service (a short walk according to him) which actually turned into a long walk, up hill and me in flip flops, the energy level dropped for awhile.

Thanks to Grand Forks for a great State Convention. They really went all out and the members who attended went home with our renewed energy to our organization.

See you at the Capitol!

## We Need Your Support!!

### Please Join Us!

The NDRTA has made great strides during the interim legislative session gaining support of HB 1022 and SB2277, a supplemental payment for Retired Teachers.

Although we have made progress and Governor Hoeven has included 5 million dollars in his budget for Retired Teachers, there is still work to do!

We need **YOU** to impact Retiree Legislation. Join your fellow Retired Teachers by committing to come to Bismarck! We will be implementing several "calls to action" as the session moves forward where we will ask YOU to come to Bismarck to show your support for NDRTA Retiree Legislation.

Detailed information will be sent to local Unit Presidents pertaining to times, dates and locations as we know more, so please be sure to watch for updated information.

Thank you for all you have done thus far; we will be successful with your help!

### Who to Contact

If you would like more information on attending this event, please contact the following people in your area:

**Bismarck/Mandan RTA:** Dorrit Huber, 223-4117

**Cass County RTA:** Patricia Adams, 239-9684

**Central Red River Valley RTA:** Marlene Hefta, 235-3837

**Dickey-LaMoure Cty. RTA:** Jeanette Robb-Ruenz, 349-4329

**Fargo Area RTA:** Michelle Vannote, 281-0160.

**Grand Forks Area RTA:** Ginny Bollman, 775-3466.

**Lonetree Area RTA:** Shirley Teske, 547-2546.

**Minot Area RTA:** Gary Thuner, 838-3572.

**Missouri River Basin RTA:** Marlene Schriefer, 983-4269.

**Slope Area RTA:** Marcia Frank, 225-4975

**South Central Area RTA:** Delmar Zimmerman 452-2419.

**Southwest Area RTA:** Grace Janikowski, 279-5853.

**Stutsman County Area RTA:** Tom Norman, 252-0715.

**Turtle Mountain Area RTA:** Jeanie Orke, 228-2551

**Valley City Area RTA:** Arlys Netland, 854-0312.

**Williston Area RTA:** Larry Lynne, 572-3642

Remember

### NDRTA Is....

- An Independent organization instrumental in raising pension benefits for retirees
- Monitoring state legislative and retirement proceedings
- Integral in promotion of retiree economic, social and professional status
- Your source for Association Newsletter, workshops and educational information

# NEWS FROM THE UNITS

## What's happening in...

### Bismarck/Mandan Area

*Submitted by: Madeline Heer, Bismarck-Mandan RTA Secretary*

We are in the second year of having co-presidents. The Co-Presidents enjoy working together and have provided the members with very interesting and viable programs throughout these last two years. It is a way of sharing the responsibilities and providing leadership experience.

We kicked off the year in late August with an interesting program by Mike Lynk of the ND Attorney General's Office. Mr. Lynk spoke about meth use in ND.

In September we heard reports on the ND State Convention of Retired Teachers. This meeting also featured a Hobby Showcase in which members shared their passions, collections, and hobbies.

Members again volunteered at Papa's Pumpkin Patch. The Pearce family who operate the Pumpkin Patch donated \$1000. to our unit for association projects and charities as a thank you for our volunteer efforts.

Our charitable contribution for this quarter goes to the Bismarck Public School Program for Homeless Children, "Carrie's Kids".

Kelly Schmidt, North Dakota State Treasurer, was the featured speaker at our October meeting. She shared her experiences with teachers while raising their four sons and was very complimentary of teachers and the work they do.

Our annual memorial service during our November meeting honored the memories of the former members of our unit of the retired teachers association. May their labors live on in the lives of their many students.

During the November meeting, discussion involved a letter to Bismarck School Board members expressing concern over bonuses presented to the top administrators for the success of Bismarck classroom teachers in raising test scores.

We continue to receive reports on the Legislative activity which could increase retirement dollars for those teachers presently receiving retirement funds. We are encouraged to become informed on proposed legislative activities and make our needs and concerns known to our individual legislators and the Governor's office.

### Cass County Area

*Submitted by: LaVonne Rustad, Cass County RTA Secretary*

Recruitment of new members became one of our organization's primary goals this year.

Personal phone calls and invitations have been fruitful. Each fall meeting, we've had 3-7 guests/new members in attendance. Permanent name tags made by Don Harris and 2-3 monthly greeters have helped to provide a welcoming atmosphere.

Co-President-Elect Margaret Woodward and Carol Zimmerman continue to plan interesting programs. Tammy Swift, a columnist for the Fargo Forum, included her trademark humor in her September presentation.

The humor of the September meeting carried into October when Margaret Woodward appeared in appropriate hockey wear to introduce the speakers for the October program. Steve Ratti and Mary Niles presented a wealth of information about the Urban Plains Center, a new hockey facility for the Fargo Force and other area hockey teams.

In November, Mark Berntson, representing the NDEA and the West Fargo school district, presented the program "A Ready Child", which thoroughly explained the nine points of an NDEA initiative, in which the mission is to help every North Dakota child be ready for learning and ready for life.

Members are anticipating the December meeting which will include musical entertainment by the West Fargo high school carolers under the direction of Jeff Mueller, additional musical activities to entertain ourselves, a silent auction and door prizes. It should be a delightful way to celebrate the season.

### Central Red River Valley

*Submitted by: Barbara Gilbertson, CRRV RTA Secretary*

Barbara Gilbertson of Finley was the recipient of the Silver Apple Award for the CRRV RTA. Barbara taught in the Finley School District for 36 years. She retired in 1995 and has enjoyed extensive traveling with her husband of 51 years. She is currently also the Unit Secretary for the CRRV RTA.

Marion Devlin of Hope was honored by family and friend for her 90th birthday at an open house.

### Fargo Area

*Submitted by: Sharon Anderson, Fargo Retired Teachers Association Secretary*

In March, the Fargo Retired Teachers Association heard from guest speaker Andrea Halgrimson who spoke about memories of Fargo.

During the April meeting, Eric Baker spoke on small space gardening. Members were thanked for donations to the Northwood School.

At our May meeting we were introduced to the three scholarship recipients. They each shared their future educational plans and

thanked us. Joy Reski reminded us to carry the Files of Life with us when traveling.

During the September meeting, members of our organization were presented with a fashion show put on by Scheels stores with fall clothing.

At our October meeting, we started our new theme "Personal Experience Stories from our Teaching Days". We were entertained and educated by Colburn Hvidston, with his photo journalism. Members brought items for the food Pantry and will do so each month.

During the November meeting, Rose Gudmundson and Jeanette Stone told of their trip on one of the Honor Flights for WWII Veterans.

December was time to enjoy the music provided by the Northern Gold Chamber Orchestra from North High School under the direction of Dan Italiano.

Our FRTA staff and guests have made our meetings so entertaining and informative about timely issues. We are so fortunate to have this opportunity to be together.

### Grand Forks Area

*Submitted by: Gary and Dottie Swanson, Greater Grand Forks RTA Secretaries*

The Greater Grand Forks Retired Teachers Association has had a great fall and early winter season. Our meetings are at the Ramada Inn at 12:00 p.m. on the third Tuesday of each month. Each session includes lunch, laughter and entertainment. Please join us any month if you happen to be in our area.

We give a big thanks to all who attended the State Convention held here in September. Attendance was excellent and fun, fellowship and learning was experienced by all! The Northwood libraries received \$1,056.50 from the silent auction. Thank you bidders!

Again this year we have had excellent presenters at our monthly meetings. In October Arlette Moen, from the Circle of Friends Humane Society, described its operation and services. November brought us Mike Blake of the UND Music Department. He shared his experiences relating to his heart transplant. In December we received Holiday singing from the students of Maria Williams Kennedy. More lively and informative programs are lined up for our remaining sessions.

Our Association has recently made donations to local food cupboards, food cards for family needs, the Grand Forks Foundation for Education, Ethiopia Reads, Valley Memorial Homes Pen Pal Program and Dollars for Scholars. Our goal, again this year, is membership over 100. Our Association wishes all of you fellow-retirees a warm and comfortable New Year and winter!

## Lone Tree Area

*Submitted by: Ann Sitz, Lonetree Area RTA Secretary*

The Lonetree Retired Teachers Association meets every other month, April through December. A typical meeting consents of current business and a program. We donate to community causes such as the Christmas Anonymous Program and give to memorials.

Ken Tupa from the North Dakota Retired Teachers Association State Office was our most recent guest speaker. He gave updated information on our retirement benefits and since his visit, we have sent our local legislators input on Senate Bill #109. We have also had additional programs on diabetes and on costs and services provided by funeral homes.

Additionally, our committees continue to get us information in their areas. The health committee reminded us last summer to wear repellent to protect from mosquito bites and West Nile. It was also suggested to visit your doctor about the shot for shingles. After the business meeting, an afternoon of games is planned for the December meeting.

## Minot Area

*Submitted by: Karen Johnson, Minot Area RTA Secretary*

Teachers are used to the starting and stopping of the school year. That same occurrence is part of our organization. How great it is to begin again. MARTA welcomed new members and rejoiced in the return of the familiar friends.

During the State Fair in Minot, we gathered to support the Divided We Fail initiative, offering our services to the AARP booth. The first program in the fall was a slide presentation of the life of Dr. Ethyl Percy Andrus. In September, Mike Fogarty, elementary principal, shared his love of mountaineering with us. October brought one of our own to the front. Eilene Emly gave an informative presentation on Parkinson's disease. In November we had First Choice Physical Therapist, Reed Argent describe the ways we can exercise to maintain balance and prevent accidental falling. How blessed we are to be able to end the year with a high school choir coming to share Christmas music with us.

Great leadership by President Gary Thuner, new and informative information and the sharing around a great lunch are all part of each meeting. This is a great place to share a part of the past and the learning of how to continue to be a part of a great nation, actively involved and informed.

## Missouri River Basin

*Submitted by: Alice Dilger, Missouri River Basin RTA Secretary*

The Missouri River Basin Retired Teachers Association met on November 17, 2008 at the Woodshed in Hazen, N.D.

Ken Tupa of the NDRTA and Representative Randy Christmann met with us regarding retiree bill number 109.

It was requested that we start thinking about what kind of programs we would like for next year. Joann Price motioned to send our scholarship money direct to the recipient instead of directly to the college. The motion was seconded and carried and the meeting was adjourned.

## South Central

*Submitted by: Deloris Zimmerman, South Central RTA Secretary*

The SCRTA had its last meeting of the year on October 13, 2008, at the Prairie Winds Restaurant in Wishek.

A series of programs were planned again for this year. Tom Tupa, Representative of the NDRTA explained and discussed the up-coming 2009 Legislative proposals. Delmar and Deloris Zimmerman presented a video program on the Lewis and Clark Expedition, the Wishek Hospital gave us an informative program on physical therapy, Legislative District #28 incumbent Legislators and Legislative candidates discussed NDRTA Bill 109, and Judy Austad, from the State Attorney General's Consumer Protection Agency presented a program on Identity Theft. SCRTA held its annual dinner for its members, spouses and friends at the Prairie Winds Restaurant in Wishek on November 10, 2008.

Our Unit meets during the months of May through October, as some of our members spend the winters in Mesa and Sun City West, AZ, spend more time on their hobbies, or just rest up for the summer months.

## Southwest Area

*Submitted by: Charlotte Pladsen, Acting Secretary, SWARTA*

The South West RTA met Tuesday, November 4th at the Sunny Home Apartment Lounge. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and a patriotic song was sung.

Roll call was taken by asking members "Did you vote today?" The minutes and Treasurers report from our last meeting were read and approved and money was given to Lynn Reinhiller for a memorial.

A letter from AARP pertaining to their project for an education support system for new teachers was read, Phylis Bakke was presented with the Andrus Award and Grace Janikowski received the Silver Apple Award at the State Convention.

Our activity for this meeting was making Christmas center pieces for the Southwest Long Term Care dining room.

Our next meeting will be in March and the program will be "Let's Take Time for Tea".

## Turtle Mountain

*Submitted by: Ruby Krause, Turtle Mountain Area RTA Secretary*

The Turtle Mountain Area RTA began its current year with a September meeting near Lake Metigoshe. Professor Charles Lura of MSU-Bottineau gave a complete history of the flora and fauna in the area. We welcomed new members Janice Schepp and Roger Slotsve. Our very able President is once again Jeannie Orke. In October we heard from the candidates for the legislature from Bottineau County. Reports were given on the State Convention and we all made mention of the spectacular autumn colors that were on display this year in the area.

The November meeting was cancelled because of a snowstorm, but a bit of snow did not deter 14 members who came for the annual Christmas meeting. Forty-one dollars and twenty-five cents were collected and donated to the Rolette Nursing Home for use as Bingo prizes. We will gather again in March for a focus on health and fitness.

## Valley City Area

*Submitted by: Valley City RTA Secretary, Arlys Netland*

The VCARTA has 78 members. This is an increase of 3 over our ending membership in May.

Programs this year have included the City Administrator, Jon Cameron, a local teacher, Mike Watterson, who traveled to India on an educational grant, James Verway, with Barnes County Veterans Services, and Theresa Garrahy with an "On the Move" promotional talk.

Members were saddened by the recent death of long time member, Leland Sabby.

Ina Sabby won an Award of Merit at the Sheyenne Valley Flower show with her orchid potted plant.

In January, the members will be hosting Bingo at the Sheyenne Care Center. Funds were donated to a student in each of the elementary schools to assist in purchasing Christmas items.

## Williston Area

*Submitted by: Dave Hauser, Williston Area RTA Secretary*

The first fall meeting of the Williston Area RTA was on September 9, 2008. The meeting was held at the Missouri River Breaks Lodge. We toured the beautiful lodge and had ice cream with flamed bananas and June Berry sauce for the topping. We discussed the programs for the coming year as well as dates for future meetings. Edith Senti was nominated for the Silver Apple Award, which was presented to her at the State Convention in Grand Forks.

Our November meeting was held on November 13, at Books on Broadway, with Chuck Wilder (owner), who also gave a brief review of a few of the books and their authors. Dessert and coffee were served.

# NDRTA Membership

Membership renewal forms for 2009 were mailed out in June.

Thank you for your continued commitment to NDRTA.

The NDRTA newsletter is sent to all current 2009 NDRTA State members. If you know someone who hasn't received their Newsletter or is not a NDRTA member, please have them fill out the membership form on page below.

Please encourage ALL non-members to join NDRTA. Membership is \$18.00 per year and is used toward protecting and enhancing YOUR retirement benefits. Remember, the NDRTA is the ONLY association in North Dakota EXCLUSIVELY representing Retired Teachers.



## NDRTA Membership Enrollment Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_ SSN \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ PH# \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

### Choose One Method of Payment

Email \_\_\_\_\_ **Membership to take effect July 1st of each year** Year Retired \_\_\_\_\_

If you are interested in the convenience of paying future due vis automatic deduction from your July TFFR annuity check, please enclose \$18.00 for the 2008-2009 membership year and also complete the following information to withhold for the next membership year 2009-2010. The deadline for payroll deduction sign-up is June 15th of each year.

Enclosed is my check for \$18.00 to keep my membership current for this year, IN ADDITION, PLEASE SIGN ME UP FOR PAYROLL DEDUCTION FOR NEXT YEAR. This authorization will remain in effect until I choose to terminate by written notice to the North Dakota Teachers Fund for Retirement prior to June 15th of any year.

Enclosed is \$18.00 (beginning 2008-2009) for annual membership payable by June 30th of each year.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**MAIL TO: NDRTA • PO BOX 447 • BISMARCK, ND 58502-0447**

# AARP North Dakota News

*Submitted By: Lyle Halvorson | AARP North Dakota | ASD - Communications*



*The power to make it better.*

## 2009 North Dakota Legislative Priorities

The North Dakota Legislature got underway January 6. Legislators will be addressing issues important to AARP members and others. To receive weekly e-updates from AARP North Dakota on what is happening at the legislature, register online at [www.aarp.org/getinvolved](http://www.aarp.org/getinvolved).

Weekly reports will *only* be available by e-mail.

## AARP Priority Issues

During the legislative session, AARP will focus on these priorities:

- Expanding home- and community-based care to allow people to stay in their own homes longer.
- Funding to establish an Aging and Disabilities Resource Center – a central place for families to find out about choices for long-term support and care services for people who are older or have a disability.
- Improving transportation options for people, especially in rural areas.
- Increasing the level of income individuals who receive Medicaid may keep for basic needs like food and shelter.
- Improving the state's adult guardianship laws.

With weekly updates, you will know where and when to contact your legislators on these important issues. Please register at [www.aarp.org/getinvolved](http://www.aarp.org/getinvolved).

Divided  WeFail.org

## Divided We Fail

AARP and Divided We Fail are implementing strategies and plans to ensure that health care and financial security will be front and center among the issues taken up by the Obama Administration and 111th Congress. AARP has sent a letter to President-elect Obama telling him that we are ready to work with his Administration to advance the critical issues of health and economic security.

The marathon election season reached an historic conclusion and with that we all should celebrate the many successes that filled the first phase of Divided We Fail. The list of accomplishments is long.

Most importantly, we surpassed our goal of engaging one million Americans in Divided We Fail and currently stand with nearly 1.3 million supporters. These "Million Voices for Change" include more than 3,500 North Dakotans. Our many volunteers were critical in helping us reach this milestone.

A large event took place in Washington, D.C., on January 13 to showcase the more than one million Divided We Fail pledges. An event is also being planned in North Dakota.

The **N**orth **D**akota  
**R**etired **T**eachers **A**ssociation  
*NDRTA Newsletter*  
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Bismarck, ND 58502-0447

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# 2009 State Convention August 25-26, 2009

*Grand Dakota Lodge &  
Conference Center*

*532 15th Street West  
Dickinson, ND 58601*

*For Room Reservations Call:  
1-800-422-0949 or 701-483-5600  
Convention Rate \$69/night!*

MARK YOUR  
CALENDAR!

48th Annual NDRTA  
State Convention  
Hosted By  
The Slope Area  
Retired Teachers Association

Theme: "Happy Days are Here"  
- Focus on Happines

Watch for Additional Information

**NDRTA**