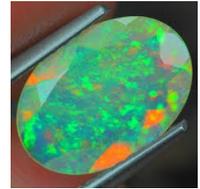


GEMS



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Hello Fall to all REAL members:

Wow! Summer just flew by and the cooler weather and light rain has started. We need the rain as we are about 1.5 inches below normal for the northern region of Idaho. I am glad for the nice fall weather. I have always said that I would be happy living in an igloo!

Several weeks ago, I received a newsletter from the IEA Retired Educators. In the newsletter, the IEA hosted two meetings to gather ideas as to how to make the IEA retired programs "stronger, more active, and growing." I did not attend the meetings, but suggestions from those meetings include: getting an IEA retired member on the PERSI Board of Directors, inviting key guests on topics of interest to retired members, creating lists of resources for retired members, create "travel groups", and a few other ideas. It occurred to me that the goals the IEA Retired group have and our goals as REAL are very similar and overlap.

I would like to start a dialogue with the IEA Retired committee and see if there is more common ground that we share and perhaps combine the two groups as there are limited members we can draw on. If we share the same ideals, can Idaho support two separate retired educator groups? Is there a problem that I am not aware of in the past that would preclude merging?

I would like to pursue checking with IEA Retired and bring ideas to the Regional Conferences in April. If anyone has any comments please e-mail me share them...good or bad so I can get a feel for how you, the members, feel about merging.

I have not started to update the Rules and Regulations folders as yet, but promise to do so soon. I will be e-mailing the committee members once I get more organized. My husband is recuperating from knee replacement surgery and I am the in-home nurse/slave. It has been traumatic for him as he has never been debilitated before. But we shall overcome and things will turn out well. He is feeling better already. As for me, I need patience and more teeth to grind!

I would like to thank all who attended the meeting in August. There is always good information given the board from all of the committee chairs, unit presidents, and regional coordinators. I think everyone who is an officer of a local unit of REAL should attend at least one of those August meetings.

Enough for now. Enjoy the holidays and I will be coordinating the January phone in meeting with Connie and get information out to those who need to attend as soon as possible.

Patricia Hoch
President



Chocolate comes from cocoa
which comes out of a tree.

That makes it a plant.

Therefore, chocolate
counts as salad.

The end.

*For All the chocolate lovers in
REAL. You have now been vindicated.*

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LEGISLATIVE REPORT

While attending the Advocacy Conference (NRTA) in Washington, DC, Connie Bunch and I visited the offices of our two elected Representatives and two elected Senators from Idaho. We shared the following information with them and you also need to let them know this information and how you feel about the decisions made in Washington in your name. This advocacy is important. Senator Risch told us the Federal Government was funding Social Security because there was not enough money supporting the program!

Social Security:

Social security is a self-financed program. It is separate from the rest of the budget, financed from employee and employer payroll tax contributions, as well as the interest on bonds held in the Social Security trust funds.

Social Security is barred from spending more than it takes in, so it does not contribute to the deficit and will not in the future.

Any changes to Social Security, which has run surpluses for most of the last 30 years, must be done within the proper context of ensuring the retirement security of present and future generations of Americans, and not for the purposes of reducing the federal deficit.

Social Security does face long-term shortfall, but its trust funds currently hold over \$2.7 trillion in special-issue Treasury bonds. The trust funds can only be used to pay for Social Security benefits.

Retirement security should be a separate debate from a budget deal.

Chained CPI:

Chained CPI is a harmful proposal that would cut benefits for seniors and veterans.

The protection from inflation that the cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) provides is a fundamental part of the Social Security program. A lower COLA would mean seniors, veterans, and people with disabilities would be less and less able to keep up as the cost of the things they spend money on like health care, utilities, and prescription drugs keep going up.

Washington needs to address our nations budget challenges, but not by cutting the benefits to seniors.

Medicare:

Medicare needs to be strengthened by reducing costs throughout the health care system.

By improving care coordination, reforming Medicare's payment incentives to doctors and hospitals for providing good care not how many patients they see or services they perform and reducing waste and inefficiency, Medicare can be put on stable ground for the future.

Savings can be found in three areas:

- 1) Payment and Delivery Reform;
- 2) Prescription Drugs;
- 3) Program Efficiency and Waste.

Idaho Representatives:

Rep. Raul Labrador 202-225-6611, 888-3188, www.labrador.house.gov
Rep. Mike Simpson 202-225-5531, 334-1953, www.simpson.house.gov
Sen. Mike Crapo 202-224-6142, 334-1776, www.crapo.senate.gov
Sen. Jim Risch 202-224-2752, 342-7985, www.risch.senate.gov

BE STRONG, SPEAK UP

Barb Blasch

Legislative Chair

TELE-TOWN HALL MEETINGS

The Telephone-town hall meetings with our members of Congress have been set up as follows:

Confirmed:

Sen. Mike Crapo (confirmed):
Wed. 10/23 @ 11am MST)

Tentative:

Rep. Raul Labrador (either
Thurs. 10/17 or Fri. 10/18) @
11 AM MST

Sen. Jim Risch (penciled in for
Wed. 11/13) @ 11 AM MST

Connie will update on the website when the Tele-Town hall meetings become confirmed.



Even if its not Friday,
Smile anyway.

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Greetings to you ALL!

I do hope that you experienced many pleasurable days during the summer, and are now refreshed by the cool beauty of fall. It is still my favorite season of the year!

At the August 23rd board meeting held at the AARP state office on Eagle Rd, I shared my experiences while attending my first ASRTE (Association of Retired Teacher Executives) meeting in San Diego. Several of the members shared memories of Charlie, and it was wonderful to know how much they appreciated his contributions over the years. The speakers addressed several topics, one being the need for change in our associations so that we remain responsive to the needs, wants, and expectations of current members as well as prospective members, which are constantly evolving and changing. One quote credited to Brendan Burchard has stuck with me: "There are only two things that change your life. Either something new comes into your life, or something new comes out of your life." Food for thought!

Another issue was that of leadership. Leaders need to have a vision, set goals, be organized, positive, committed, have passion for the value of their organization, be flexible, and be good listeners.

We were also given information about health care reform - who will benefit and how we all may be affected. Medicaid expansion is a critical part of the reform in order not to cut a large percentage of low income folks from any assistance or access, and because drug prices can only be negotiated through Medicaid, not Medicare.

From September 16 - 19, Barbara Blasch and I attended the AARP/ NRTA Advocacy conference in Washington, D.C. The attendees were state legislative chairpersons and executive directors/secretaries. The excellent speakers presented information on retirement security including Social Security & Pensions, and health care concerns. We were given information which prepared us for our visits to our Representatives and Senators. I'll share some of this: Pensions are under attack across the nation and yet are extremely important to the health and welfare of all retirees. All of us need to pay attention to discussions concerning the proposed moves to Defined Contributions away from Defined Benefits, which those of us in Idaho now enjoy. Idaho's Public Employees Retirement System (PERSI) is one of the best in the nation, ranking 3rd in unfunded liabilities and also 3rd in unfunded liabilities per capita - less than \$500. Remember to thank Bob Maynard, Don Drumm, and the PERSI board.

I will be mailing the revised directories to board members this month. If you find any errors or omissions, please let me know and I'll send any corrections or additions ASAP.

It is such an honor to serve as your Executive Secretary! This is a wonderful organization, and we need to share information about the benefits of membership throughout the state! Perhaps we could put copies of the GEMS in schools and credit unions to create more name recognition.

Do have a Happy Halloween, Veterans' Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas, and any other special days that you celebrate.

Connie J. Bunch,
Executive Secretary, REAI
jeanbunch@aol.com

COLLETTE TRAVEL

I am glad to report that we have 14 people taking the trip to Holland in 2014. We will leave Boise on March 28 and return on April 5. All those going are from our BKM unit.

I just received some information on a possible trip for 2015. This trip is being offered by Collette Travel for the year 2014 and 2015 only. It is to celebrate the 70th year of Normandy. It is a 10 day trip that includes 13 meals. The departure dates are: March 12, or 19, and April 16, or 23. The cost is around \$3799.00 which includes air fare. Highlights of the trip are: Paris, Eiffel Tower Dinner, Normandy, Memorial Peace Museum, D Day Landing Beaches, Vel d' Hir Memorial, St. Mere Eglise, Bayeux Tapestry, LeMont St. Michel, and Chartres Cathedral.

Let me know if you would be interested. I am also open to any suggestions for travel sites. Remember, if you book a trip with Collette Travel; be sure to tell them you are a member of REAL. Your unit will get the 10% rebate.

Margaret Reimer
208-887-6747
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BOISE, KUNA, MERIDIAN REA-BKMREA

Donations to the Boise School Foundation

In honor of four deceased members this past year, our chapter donated \$25.00 for each to the Boise School Foundation. This has been a tradition in our chapter for many years.

Outstanding Programs Continue to Stimulate, Entertain, and Educate Us

A lineup of excellent programs are planned for the year. The first speaker at our September meeting was renowned historian, Arthur Hart, who spoke on Early Medicine in Idaho. In October, Janet Worthington, another of our favorite speakers, will do her impersonation of President Wilson's wife. Her presentation is titled, "The Invisible President."

In November we turn away from history and look at a contemporary issue presented by the Idaho Internet Crime Against Children Coalition.

Finally, in December, another favorite is returning, one of the Borah High School Choirs, directed by Heather Prinzing.

We'll let you know about our 2014 programs in our next issue.

Chapter Meetings

Our meetings are held at the Eagles Hall in Boise. It is located at the back of the shopping center off Overland, just after the turnoff from Cole. The doors open at 11:30, and lunch is provided by the Eagles. Guests are welcome to join us at our meetings, but we do ask that you make a reservation if you wish to have lunch. Margaret Reimer may be reached at 887-6747 to arrange a reservation.

Other Items of Interest

Members of PERSI who are interested may attend PERSI Board meetings to keep up to date on its status and any proposed changes. The next meeting is October 15. Meetings begin at 8:30, but it's best to arrive early. Meetings are held at the PERSI Office at 8th and Washington.

Our chapter will be awarding scholarships to students at Boise State University who are majoring in education in the spring. Watch for the announcement of the guidelines and application availability.

The Boise, Meridian, and Kuna Chapter will be offering grants to teachers who wish to undertake a special project in their classrooms. More information will be available in the near future.

Elaine Kline



IDAHO FALLS REA

Members and friends of the Idaho Falls Retired Teachers' Association met on September 17 for their first meeting of the 2013-2014 year. Pulled Pork sandwiches were prepared and attendees brought complimenting side dishes to go with them. There were some delicious fruits and vegetables from the gardens as well as beautiful flowers grown and arranged by Irene Larsen.

Members shared happenings of their summer days; always interesting to find out about travels, family reunions, grandchildren and even the arrival of one great grandson.

Membership growth and retention will be key aims for the year. Many people received letters inviting them to the meetings and were given a list of the upcoming programs.

Marilyn Taylor,
President and Eastern Region Coordinator

Lower Snake River REA

The Lower Snake River Retired Educators met at the Payette County Museum in Payette for a potluck lunch and informal meeting on Sept. 18. It was our first meeting with our new officers (some new, some returning): President, Linda Carpenter; Vice President, Debbie Ujiiye; Secretary, Anne DeBord; Treasurer, Ralph Rowley. Sharon Miller presented the symbolic "Big" check for volunteer community service hours to the mayors of Fruitland, New Plymouth, Payette, and Weiser. The LSRRE contributed 6,086 volunteer hours worth \$133,653.09. The check will be on display in each mayor's office for a period of time.

During the summer our program committee made arrangements for seven interesting programs for the coming year, as well as two social meetings. The scholarship committee has begun work on creating an application form and determining criteria for the award. We will work throughout the year to add money to our scholarship fund. At our next meeting on October 16, we will discuss ways for further community involvement beyond our individual volunteer activities. Mary Dixon will also present information about membership. The program will be the Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP).

Submitted by Sharon Miller

Squaw Butte REA

Thirty-four Squaw Butte Retired Educators enjoyed a summer field trip to Walter's Ferry and Silver City. The Lynn Hyslop family so graciously hosted these events. On August 19 for our National Day of Service, many of our retirees helped with preparing food, setting up, serving, and cleaning up for the luncheon for school district employees. A special thanks to Lyn Haun for coordinating this event. Our annual picnic was held on August 26 at the Wild Rose Park in Emmett. Approximately fifty-four retirees enjoyed hamburgers supplied by our unit. Potluck dishes completed a yummy beginning to a new season of meetings.

Our September 23 meeting was held at the Presbyterian Church in Emmett with Sharon Holford and her crew catering a delicious lunch at a cost of \$8.00 per member. The hostesses for this meeting provided beautiful decorations for the tables and many door prizes for our drawing. Retirees contribute \$1.00 to our scholarship fund to take part in this drawing. Tonna and Greg Hershul presented an informative slide show of their anniversary trip to the Galapagos Islands. The scenery with animal and plant life was spectacular.

Our next unit meeting will be held at the Presbyterian Church on October 28. Connie Bunch, Executive Secretary of the REAI, will be presenting information regarding PERSI.

Warm clothing items such as hats, mittens, scarves, and socks will be collected to present to the schools in Gem County. Cheer basket items will be collected in November to help with the GCEA's (Gem County Education Association) annual drive for delivery to needy families at Christmas. To all units have a wonderful fall!!!

Submitted by Sheila Stickler

SEIREA

Hello from South East Idaho Retired Educators Association! We have started the fall with a bang, having 59 members and guests at our first luncheon in September. Our executive board meeting in August resulted in planning and organization for the year. We are excited for a slate of interesting speakers and topics.

We are going to continue work on our volunteer efforts in the community. We hope to surpass last year's record 8900 hours. Our goal is to reach 10,000 hours. A couple of the group volunteer efforts are the Salvation Army Bell Ringing service during the holidays and the School District 25's Festival of Trees. Individual efforts are varied and include working at My Brother's Table (a community soup kitchen), mentoring, foster grandparents, Veteran's Home, Food Bank, tutoring, Red Cross, churches, political causes, the list goes on.

Another success we have is due to the generosity of our members who attend our monthly meetings. We hold a silent auction every December meeting (items are donated by members). Not only do members get to do some serious Christmas shopping, they support a worthy cause. Last year we raised several hundred dollars. This money, along with money from our monthly 50/50 drawing, allow our group to give our scholarships to deserving students at the end of each year. We also donate money to School District #25 for their year-end retired teachers' tea. A monthly service the group does is a cash donation to the local Food Bank or Salvation Army. We ask each member to donate \$1.00 for this cause. Little steps add up; proof is the totals seen at the end of the year. Again, several hundred dollars are given to these worthy organizations.

Our last goal for the year is to increase membership. In May a few members go to the Retirement Tea at the local school district and invite the new retirees to our organization. Letters are sent out to new retirees and prospective members in August. With the letter we include a short pamphlet with our meeting times, costs, location, and topics to be covered. We hope to continue growing! Hope you all can come visit us.

Loretta Hanft
President

NIREA-North Idaho Retired Educators

No news reported this quarter.

Minidoka-Cassia REA

No news reported this quarter.

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Retired Educators of North Central Idaho-RENCI

The first meeting of RENCi's 2013-14 year was a picnic that was scheduled to be held at Lewiston's Sunset Park. September 18th, the day of the picnic, dawned dark, damp and chill. Co-chair Betty Goetzinger quickly contacted the nearby Salvation Army. They generously invited us to use their Soup Kitchen for our picnic for no charge. Approximately 35 members attended the gathering-most bringing goodies to share so a delicious time was had by all. Members voted to donate money to the youth and general funds of the Army as a thank you for letting us use their facility.

Our program schedule for the year has been filled. In October we will hear from the director of Interlink, Ray Rosch. Interlink is an interfaith group of volunteers in the Lewiston/ Clarkston area dedicated to helping seniors remain independent. Ray does serious work but he is a funny guy. We look forward to hearing from him.

In November we will be bringing crafts, goodies and white elephants for our auction at which we raise money for the scholarship we award annually to a student majoring in education.

December finds us sharing our entertainment with the Rotary Club. We usually hear holiday music from an elementary group and a group from Lewiston High School.

At this time of the year, we also contribute to the local Veteran's Home. Favorite causes include toiletries for the residents and cash for hair care for the ladies who reside there.

RENCi- submitted by
JoAnn Bjerke
Co-president

Twin Falls REA

It's October already, and I have little to report.

I attended the August Board Meeting, and I have the minutes published here, somewhere.

For our September meeting, we had our annual kick-off picnic. It is always fun, especially, tasting the various "specialties" people cook up.

We were able to sign up a couple new members. However, we always hope to recruit more.

For October, I was hoping to get a presentation on the Affordable Care Act, but so did everyone else.

So, as of right now, we will have presentation from the Idaho State Fish and Game Department on various subjects, such as wolves, impact of the recent forest fires, etc.

In November, we will have Susan Harris from CSI introduce us to the art of "Bird Watching". I seem to be stuck on our natural environment topics.

Have a good fall!!!

Edward Arndt

