Once again KEA-Retired received an award for largest numerical increase in membership at the NEA-Retired annual meeting in Orlando, Fla., June 28-29. KEA-Retired added 816 new members to the now 306,777 NEA-Retired members. KEA-Retired President Joyce Dotson received the award on behalf of our association.

NEA-Retired President Tom Curran and the leadership team led the 32nd Annual NEA-Retired meeting with this year’s theme Unite, Inspire, Lead. At a previous NEA-Retired Annual Meeting, President Curran chided retired members to “Give up their position, but not their profession.” NEA-Retired continues to grow, and members have led the way in uniting, inspiring and leading through their continued activism to strengthen public schools for every student, and have not given up their profession.

Raising money for the NEA-Fund For Children and Public Education is always an important part of NEA and NEA-Retired. KEA-Retired again rose to the challenge by providing auction items, personal donations, and other fund-raising activities during the annual meetings as well as at home. The average amount each KEA delegate raised or contributed was $321.78. The total amount KEA contributed to the NEA-Fund For Children and Public Education was more than $46,000. Another important fund is the Jack Kinman Scholarship Fund, which collected more than $6,400. We thank all who donate time, effort and money to these important funds.

NEA President Lily Eskelsen Garcia, NEA Vice President Becky Pringle, and NEA Secretary-Treasurer Princess Moss addressed the meeting of retired members in a panel presentation addressing a theory and a plan to empower educators. The panel presentation was entitled: Visions of the Future of NEA-Retired.

The NEA is ramping up its Empower Educators Program, in which active members are empowered to shape learning for their students and collaboratively develop student-centered school plans that can then contribute to elevating the best of educators’ professional practices to shape district, state, and federal policies.

This theory involves a significant and deliberate shift in focus for the organization towards greater support and investment in local, school, and educator level initiatives that involve collaboration with critical stakeholders to “push up” on the system to impact practice and policy at the district, state, and national levels. The Retired organization and its members should be a significant, contributing part of the success of the program.

In light of the continuous attacks on public education and the test-and-punish mentality, educators have lost the decision making power in their classrooms they once had and are faced with obstacles they have never...
I visited the apple tree a few days ago. The tree full of red apples is ready and waiting on the deer to come for their feast. When I visited I was pleased to be greeted by a deer and her fawn in the driveway. They were headed for the backyard.

Elsewhere in this issue you will read about the NEA convention. We enjoyed connecting with old friends and making new ones. Being in a huge place with as many as 10,000 people with mutual interests is awesome.

Foremost in my mind as I write this is the upcoming election and the funding crisis facing the Kentucky Teacher Retirement System. It is crucial that we participate fully in the election process. I implore you to read the candidates’ statements and look at the comparison pieces as they come out. They will outline what each candidate plans to do if elected. We should all look carefully at their plans for the Kentucky Teacher Retirement System. We need to assure our retirement system is well funded and stable going forward to protect our own financial security.

While meeting with other state presidents at the NEA Retired Organizing Conference last year, I was captivated by a statement from the New Jersey president. She said, “Retired teachers are the daytime face of public education.” It’s so true. We are asked to attend meetings all the time that are going to influence decision making about educators and public education.

While active educators are in school, we are the people who attend and have an opportunity to impact decisions.

I enjoyed the opportunity to be the daytime face for my former local by attending opening day for teachers in Shelby County. There were 21 retired teachers in attendance who had been invited to come and receive shirts imprinted with the Shelby County Public Schools logo. On the back the shirt proclaimed, “Hug Me, I’m a Retired Teacher.” I invite you to get active and participate with me, particularly, in the meetings of the KTRS Work Group appointed by Gov. Steve Beshear.

We have two excellent people who represent us on this work group, Mary Ann Blankenship, executive director of KEA, and Brent McKim, president of the Jefferson County Teachers Association.

So far there have been three meetings of the group and it is time for us to make our presence known in the audience.

With the fiscal crisis that faces the KTRS, Gov. Beshear is asking the work group to complete its work and submit its report to him on or before Dec. 1. All meetings are held in the Capitol Annex and begin at 10 am. More information including agendas can be found at www.governor.ky.gov.

Future meetings will be held on the following dates: Sept. 11, Sept. 25, Oct.16, Nov. 6, and Nov. 20. Please join me and show our “daytime” face and be sure to VOTE!
Thank you, Kellogg, for the use of your catch phrase. However, this article is not about cereal. Rather it is about keeping our bodies from making those three sounds: snap, crackle, pop!

We will not live on this earth forever, but while we do we can improve our quality of life. Please understand that these hints or ideas will not make everything right, but in most cases you will feel better and prevent many problems that seniors have as parts wear out.

Through the health care provided by our health plan, we have access to the Silver Sneakers program which gives us free access to many exercise venues in our communities. In my area it is the Family Y. I also work in the recreation ministry in our church.

Many venues offer group fitness classes such as Pilates, Zumba, Senior Fitness, and other golden opportunities for exercise geared toward our personal needs. These should be checked out in your area. You’ll be pleasantly surprised, once you get over that “OH MY” hump that prevails when a new exercise program begins. You do not have to run marathons to keep in shape.

I will attempt to present hints and sample programs in this series. Please understand that if you have been sedentary it is important to get physician approval before beginning strenuous activity. Not all activities are suitable for everyone, either.

Like to travel? It is important to keep moving when we travel for an extended period. This is especially true during long flights or car trips. On a plane, get up from your seat periodically and walk the aisle, especially on flights of three hours or more. This prevents the blood from pooling in the legs and reduces the chance of a clot. This also keeps the leg muscles from getting stiff or cramping. In long car trips you can stop and walk around the car.

Walking is a great exercise at any speed. You do not have to be a power walker to get benefits. Generally it is recommended to walk for at least 30 minutes or more a day. You can set your individual goals by keeping a log of distance or time. There are all kinds of apps to use on your smart phone to keep track of your time and mileage. By moving we cause our body to lubricate the joints naturally with synovial fluid. This is true in most cases unless there is damage to the joint. Your orthopedic specialist can help you in this situation.

Do not do too much so you get discouraged or miss your exercise. It works better when you look forward to your workout. Do your workout with a partner to increase your commitment to exercise and make it a social event.

In the next article I will cover some classes available to seniors as a guide to look at a different avenue for fitness, as well as walking and jogging programs. Future articles will cover weight programs, as well as using various types of equipment at the gym.

Reactions and comments welcome:
wildcat860@aol.com
Report from Orlando

Delegates faced before. President Garcia made it very clear that we are going to lose many of these professionals out of frustration over current policy. Decision making authority must be in the hands of caring educators, and they must be empowered. She made it very clear that the power we have is coming together, uniting our colleagues and our communities. In addition, she emphasized that the reauthorization of the Elementary Secondary Education Act is a “very big deal.”

Vice President Pringle followed with a strong message to the retired assembly emphasizing the necessity of having the right people elected in policy-making positions, adding that elected and appointed officials need the guidance that only an educator can provide. She said, “We have a lot of work to do through education, advocacy and training.” She hopes that the retired members with their expertise, insight, wisdom and experience would provide guidance to help empower educators.

Princess Moss told us they looked at where we are, what we are doing, and made adjustments where necessary. “We want to know that we are putting the resources where they are needed so that educators can be empowered and successful.” She reiterated the need to be united, and added that retirees are a vital part of NEA and are needed to move forward with the Empowered Educators plan.

“A child’s zip code should not determine his education,” said Mary Kusler, Director of NEA Government Relations who reported on NEA’s ongoing congressional activities in Washington, D.C. Kusler also said an analysis of ESEA activism had been done, and the results showed that the NEA-Retired were the most active and vocal on the reauthorization issue. The reauthorization of ESEA was a top priority, and members were urged to contact their senators and tell them “to get ESEA right.”

NEA-Retired also took time to honor members and state affiliates for their outstanding work. The most important honor, The Distinguished Service Award was awarded to Gene Craig from Illinois.

Some of the other business of the NEA-Retired Meeting included adoption of standing rules, moments of remembrance, president’s report, reports of committees, election of KEA-Retired candidates to leadership positions, and action on new business items.

After the NEA-Retired annual meeting, the NEA Representative Assembly convened. The RA brought more than 7,000 members from all 50 states to Orlando, Florida for the 94th RA representing nearly 3 million members setting policy for the coming year. Delegates tackled complex issues with far-reaching implications for the profession, from the future of testing to equity in education.

Among the 120 new business items, delegates passed two high-profile NBIs supporting the recommendations of the NEA Task Force on Accountability, which recently released its report, ‘A New Vision for Student Success.’ In the report, the 19-member task force addressed issues that the current narrow focus on testing overlooks, including equity and access, and explained how shared responsibility for our educational system will best serve students.

Exciting things always happen at the RA, and this year was no exception. Matthew Powell, a first time KEA delegate was elected to the NEA Board of Directors as an ESP at Large. The KEA delegates, including retired delegates, enthusiastically helped in his campaign. Congratulations, Matthew!

The outpouring of Kentucky generosity and friendship ran rampant through the KEA delegation this year as witnessed by the camaraderie inside and outside of the delegation. A case in point was the family from Kentucky staying in a hotel that was struck by lighting and burned. The family was placed in our hotel for emergency housing, having lost all of their possessions in the fire. Hearing of the family’s misfortune, the Kentucky delegation collected nearly $900 in a matter of minutes and gave it to the misplaced family so that they could return to their home in Kentucky. Awesome!!

I encourage our members to visit the NEA web site, www.nea.org, share in the highlights of the RA, and view videos of award presentations and speeches given at the RA. I would especially encourage members to view the dynamic speeches given by NEA President, Lily Eskelsen Garcia and John C. Stocks, NEA Executive Director. These leaders truly embody this year’s NEA theme: Unite, Inspire, and Lead.
**Delegate Nominations Due October 9**

The KEA Delegate Assembly will be held April 6–8, 2016, at Louisville Marriott Downtown. KEA-Retired may have as many as 84 delegates to the assembly. The exact number will be known when membership is verified. If you wish to serve as a KEA-Retired delegate to the KEA DA, return the nomination form below to Kathy Whitlock, KEA-Retired Associate Staff. Nominations must be postmarked no later than Oct. 9. KEA-Retired delegates will receive up to $250 to pay their expenses, plus mileage at the rate paid by KEA (currently 57.5 cents per mile). Receipts are required for any expenses of $10 or more. Delegates must attend all sessions.

Nominations are also open for delegates to the NEA Representative Assembly. The NEA RA will be held in Washington, DC July 2-7, 2016. Delegates are also expected to attend the NEA-Retired Annual Meeting which will be held in Washington immediately prior to the NEA RA. KEA-Retired may have as many as 13 delegates to the NEA RA. The KEA-Retired President is an automatic delegate to the NEA RA.

If you wish to serve as KEA-Retired delegate to the NEA RA, return the nomination form below, postmarked no later than Oct. 9, to Kathy Whitlock. KEA-Retired delegates to the NEA RA will receive up to $1,650 toward expenses for attending the NEA RA and up to $700 toward expenses for attending the NEA-Retired Annual Meeting. Receipts are required for any expense of $10 or more. A written report is required with the expense voucher. Participants are expected to attend all sessions of the NEA-Retired Annual Meeting, all sessions of the NEA RA, and any caucuses held by the Kentucky delegation.

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### KEA Delegate Assembly Nomination Form

| Name: ____________________________ | Last four digits of SS# __________ |
| Address: __________________________ | or Membership # __________________ |
| City: _____________________________ | State: __________ Zip: ___________ |
| Email Address: ____________________ | Home Phone: ____________________ |
| Signature of delegate candidate: __________ | Date: ________________ |

My signature indicates that I understand and accept the attendance and stipend policy required of KEA-Retired delegates to the KEA DA.

Biographical statement to be included on ballot (limit 30 words):

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**STIPEND POLICY:**

Complete & return this form by Oct. 9 to:

KEA-Retired Delegate Elections
401 Capitol Avenue
Frankfort KY 40601

If elected, the delegate will have expenses reimbursed up to $250 plus mileage by KEA-Retired in return for attendance at all delegate business sessions and retired caucus meetings.

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### NEA Representative Assembly Nomination Form

| Name: ____________________________ | SS#__________ |
| Address: __________________________ | KEA-Retired District: __________ |
| City: _____________________________ | State: __________ Zip: __________ |
| Email Address: ____________________ | Home Phone: ____________________ |
| Signature: ________________________ | Date: ________________ |

My signature indicates that I understand and accept the attendance and stipend policy required of KEA-Retired delegates to the NEA RA.

Biographical statement to be included on ballot (limit 30 words):

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**STIPEND POLICY:**

Complete & return this form by Oct. 9 to:

KEA-Retired Delegate Elections
401 Capitol Avenue
Frankfort KY 40601

KEA-Retired will reimburse elected delegates up to $2,350 in return for attendance at the NEA-Retired annual meeting, all NEA RA business sessions and all Kentucky delegate caucus meetings.
**Districts: News & Notes**

**Upper Cumberland**  UCEA-Retired will hold its annual fall meeting Oct. 20, at David’s Steak House in Corbin. Guest speaker will be Joyce Dotson, KEA Retired President who will give an update on what is happening in Frankfort and steps we need to take to overcome the threat to our retirement systems. The meeting will begin at 11:30 a.m. All members are encouraged to attend. Our pre-delegate meeting will be held March 15, 2016, at David’s Steak House.

Clay County KEA-Retired members and active members participated in the “Back to School Bash” on Aug. 7. This event was for all students enrolled in the Clay County School System. Retired volunteers gave out water and had members fill out information sheets that updated their phone numbers, addresses and emails. Four lucky members who updated information won twenty-five dollar gift cards. Four new KEA members were recruited.

**NKEA-Retired** had its first meeting of the year Aug. 18. After lunch, Guy Kendall-Freas from NEA Member Benefits presented his identity theft workshop. Members voted to accept their new constitution and Pres. Janet Jackson introduced new UniServ Director Scott LeCates. Many retired members have been attending rallies for our endorsed candidates. Our next meeting is Oct. 20. Jane Gilbert from KTRS will be our guest speaker.

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* ... Continued on Page 7 ...*
Districts: News & Notes

Central District  KEA-Retired/Central District met Tuesday, September 8 for a dinner meeting, 5:00 p.m., at the KEA Lexington office. Guests included KEA-Retired President Joyce Dotson, Jim Sproul, KEA-Retired Director on KEA Board, a representative from the Central Kentucky Computer Society and Kayne Ishmael, KEA Assistant Executive Director for Affiliate Relations. Newly retired KEA members who are now KEA-Retired members were sent welcoming letters and information about this dinner meeting. A request for email address and a return envelope were included in each letter. New members are asked to return this information so we can keep you up-to-date in a timely manner.

Fayette County Retired members spent several hours preparing 400 packets for new employees (certified and classified) of the Fayette County Public Schools, assisting FCEA and FCESPA.

**JCTA-Retired** enjoyed a Day at the Downs at Churchill Downs in June. More than 50 members had fun together watching the races.

Then it was time for NEA. JCTA-Retired sent seven members: Elizabeth Caples, Gail DeVine, Diana Gautier, Marilyn Hazard, Kathy Hudson, Elsie Medlin and Tom Denton who was elected on the statewide ballot.

Tom Denton attended the KTRS Funding Work Group meeting July 31. Go to [www.governor.ky.gov](http://www.governor.ky.gov) for future meeting dates and plan to attend to show your concern to legislators.

Joyce Childress-Redd, JCTA-Retired Steering Committee member, attended Fancy Farm in early August. She said it was extremely interesting and was impressed with how many JCTA and KEA members, retirees and staff she saw there listening to candidates.

Our JCTA-Retired annual meeting and luncheon will be Tuesday, Oct. 13, at the Olmstead. Information, by mail, should reach members by Sept. 15.

Log on to [www.jcta.org](http://www.jcta.org), click on the JCTA-R link to see current information and save-the-date reminder for the JCTA-Retired Day at the Downs, Thursday, Nov. 12.

Please volunteer for candidates who support public schools, employees and retirees for the Nov. 3 election. Protect our retirement and benefits—VOTE!
To Do List . . .

√ Nominate yourself as a DA or RA delegate (see page 5 for details).

√ Encourage friends and family to vote for education-friendly candidates who will support full funding of the state pension plans.

√ Work to elect education-friendly candidates who will support full funding of the state pension plans.

√ Respond to JOLT’s requests.

√ Send current mailing address + e-mail address to KEA-Retired.

Find us on Facebook!

KEA-Retired has an active Facebook page dedicated (of course) to retired educators and support staff as well as our Kentucky schools and children. If you haven’t yet, please take the time to like us on Facebook and use our page as another means to stay informed and to support Kentucky schools, kids and our profession.

Retired members should feel free to contact Bob Young who maintains our Facebook page. Please free to send him pictures, dates of meetings, activities scheduled or anything else relevant to KEA-Retired districts. Send materials to bobyoung@twc.com.