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Hi Y'all. It's Finally Fall!



The sweltering heat of summer is fading away soon to be replaced with frigid, blustery winds. Trappings of summer fun are being packed away while snow shovels, sleds, and warm clothes are being located. Flowers, gardens, and other vegetation are fading into rest. Fall is a time for transitions.

But as retired education employees our transition becomes not one of rest; but rather a change in focus. We must move from knocking on doors, writing postcards, and making phone calls for KEPAC endorsed candidates to preparation for the 2020 convening of the Kentucky General Assembly. Retirees have to understand the issues currently impacting public education and be prepared to discuss appropriate actions to resolve them. Your involvement is vital since your community members respect you and your experience.

Of course, maintaining an actuarially sound pension system immediately comes to mind. Attracting and retaining the dedicated, quality education employees that Kentucky students deserve requires no less than a sound, fully funded pension system. It is up to us to tell the pension story—we paid into the system, we pre payed our COLAs, we shared the responsibility for health insurance. Our pension is a promise, not a gift. Let's not forget that retirees spend the majority of their pension funds in their local communities; thus, helping the local economy thrive.

Any talk of pensions immediately brings the question, "How are we going to fund them?" Consequently, we have to equip ourselves with an understanding of how schools are funded and the resources that are available. The 1990 Kentucky Education Reform Act demanded that schools receive equitable funding throughout the state, designing a program called SEEK funding. Over the past several years, much of the responsibility for this funding has shifted to the local school district. Money for teaching resources, student transportation, and teacher development has all but gone away. New sources of revenue must be designed. Charter schools and school vouchers may wellacerbate the funding issue. As long as the funding available for education remains constant, introducing these new approaches will further divide the funding into portions smaller than schools and districts are currently receiving.

KEA President Eddie Campbell has used his President's Points e-mails to flesh out the various issues. These can be accessed at

<https://www.kea.org/members-publications-kea-president-s-points>. Your knowledge of educational issues will be enhanced by reading these one-page documents.

Did you know that October 21-25 was Retired Teacher Appreciation Week? I did not. Each of you is deeply appreciated for all that you have given to the profession, all that you have done during the fall election campaign, and all that you will do during the legislative session.

Thanks for VOTING. It is fundamental to preserving the American way of life.

Brenda

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KEA-Retired/Tom Denton Memorial Scholarship 2019-20 Application Guidelines

KEA-Retired invites eligible students to apply for the KEA-Retired/Tom Denton Memorial Scholarship. Named in honor of late educator Tom Denton, who served as KEA Vice President and later, as KEA-Retired President, the scholarship is funded by interested supporters of education.

Scholarships will be presented yearly using the principal and interest in the fund. The scholarship amount may vary each year but will range between \$800 - \$1000 annually. At the discretion of KEA-Retired, and if they believe funds allow, more than one scholarship may be awarded each year. Each applicant is eligible for only one award.

Students considered for scholarships shall be juniors, seniors, or MAT candidates in a Kentucky college for the following school year.

Preference will be given to students who are KEA Aspiring Educator members, plan to teach in Kentucky, have an outstanding academic record, show evidence of financial need, and have family members who are members of KEA or KEA-Retired.

Applications may be obtained by contacting Kathy Whitlock at Kathryn.Whitlock@kea.org. For the 2019-20 academic year, the completed application and all requested supporting documents must be received in the KEA-Retired office by 5:00 p.m. eastern on Monday, January 6, 2020. The application and supporting documents may be mailed, hand-delivered, emailed or faxed to the KEA-Retired office at:

Address: KEA-Retired, 401 Capitol Ave., Frankfort, KY 40601

Email: KEA-Rscholarship@kea.org

Fax number: (502) 696-8907

Recipients will be selected by the KEA-Retired selection committee. **The successful applicant(s) will be notified of their award by March 1, 2020.** The scholarship will be presented at the KEA-Retired Annual Meeting, which will occur on Wednesday, April 1, 2020 in Louisville.

Receiving the KEA-Retired Scholarship does not limit the student from receiving other KEA sponsored scholarships.

FRIEND OF EDUCATION AWARD

(ESTABLISHED IN 2016 BY THE KEA-RETIRED BOARD OF DIRECTORS)

The KEA-Retired Friend of Education Award is an annual recognition of a person, organization or group whose leadership, acts, and support have contributed to the advancement of public education, public school employees, public school students, and retirees.

Any member of the Kentucky Education Association-Retired may nominate an individual, organization or group for this award. The nominee shall have significantly contributed to the advancement of public education and education employees through exhibited leadership and acts that support public education on the state level.

The award will be presented at the KEA-Retired Annual meeting.

Contact Kathy Whitlock at Kathryn.Whitlock@kea.org for the nomination form. All nominations must be received by February 1 at the same e mail address.

Districts: News & Notes

First District Retired held its first luncheon meeting for 2019-2020 in September with a program on TRS Health benefits and changes for 2019-2020. Approximately 40 members were in attendance. In the business portion of the meeting President Arletta Kennedy presented a first reading for an amendment to the district constitution concerning an alternate for the second Board seat. Reports were given by Treasurer, Charlotte Benton; minutes by Celeste Emerson, Secretary, were approved; and a state Retired Board report was presented by Donna Whitfield and Lana Blish, Board members. In October, the Retired held a voter registration drive at the local high school with 32 new registrants participating, organized a party to write post cards for 915 retirees urging them to vote in November for KEPAC endorsed candidates and attended the Paducah Chamber's Governor's debate. Whew! this is a busy and critical campaign season! Save the date of our next meeting Monday, October 28, 11:30 a.m. at the KEA Paducah office.

Second District Retired met on September 12. The morning meeting was in Madisonville at KEA headquarters and the afternoon meeting was in Owensboro. This was done to keep the meeting as local as possible. Colmon Elridge was invited to speak at both meetings. His information was very comprehensive. The floor was opened to questions and discussion. The November 12 meeting in Madisonville was postponed do to weather. KEA Retired President Brenda McGown will present "Celebrate or Cry" at a later date.

Third District Education Association Retired: David Strode and Margaret Groves, retirees from Warren County, are piloting a new app that allows retired members to be contacted via text messaging. The same message may be sent to many members in a very short time. Recipients are able to respond to the message. Kudos to the retirees who are working tirelessly for the KEPAC recommended candidates. Members are heavily engaged in door knocking, phone calling and post card writing. To revive the organization at the district level, a communication system must be designed. Please send your desired method of contact (home mailing address, telephone number, cell phone number or e-mail address) to Brenda McGown bmcgown@twc.com unless you have previously done so.

Fourth District Retired – Our first meeting of 2019 -2020 was held on August 29th. Barbara Reeves and Nancy Reed were elected to be alternates to the KEA-R Board of Directors. Discussion on how retired can help the active teachers to elect our KEPAC candidates was the focus of the meeting. A post card party was held on October 1st to our members to vote on November 5th. If you should need additional information about our meetings, please email President Bill Wooldridge at bill933@windstream.net.

Fifth District News: It's been an exciting few months in Fifth District! Like most of you, we have dedicated our time and energy to making sure our members get out to vote and support education candidate Andy Beshear. A group of volunteers called Contact Captains committed to visit, call or write all retirees in their counties and then report back on the response. A side benefit is that they will also be "cleaning up" our contact information with an emphasis on collecting emails. Hopefully, this contact will "energize" members and result in more involvement throughout the district. Looking forward to a Destination Read project at a couple of local elementary schools...and a new governor!

NKEA is hard at work talking to voters about Andy Beshear. Jackie Colman, candidate for Lt. Governor, spoke at our GOTV event October 14. NKEA-R had a table at our Member Benefits seminar in October. Our November meeting will feature a representative from TRS to discuss health insurance. We also are collecting school supplies for elementary schools.

JCTA-Retired had our Annual Meeting and Luncheon on October, 8th. There were over 150 members in attendance. The luncheon was held at the Olmstead with the meal being catered by Mastersons. Jane Gilbert from TRS discussed the MEHP and KEHP insurance plans with our members. We were honored to have KEA-Retired President, Brenda McGown join us for lunch as well as JCTA President, Brent McKim. Our next activity is a field trip to French Lick, Indiana where we will tour the West Baden and French Lick hotels.

**KEA-Retired
District Presidents
2018-2019**

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(270) 519-2128(c)

Second District – Joy Gray
Jgray16@roadrunner.com
(270) 684-4323
(270)570-1771 (c)

Third District – Vacant

Fourth District – Bill Wooldridge
Wooldridge8903@comcast.net
(270) 735-9298

Fifth District – Lisa Petrey-Kirk
lisakpk@gmail.com
(502) 680-0740

CENTRAL – Gayle Greer
gdgreer190@windstream.net
(859) 396-4463 (c)

EKEA – LuAnn Asbury
luasbury@hotmail.com
(606) 564-0478

JCTA – Dennis Wiseman
Dennis.sinnedagain@yahoo.com
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(502) 533-8989 (c)

MCEA – Pat Richardson
pbrichardson@windstream.net
(606) 348-0500
(606) 875-6890 (c)

NKEA – Janet Jackson
Janetjackson2@juno.com
(859) 240-0447

UCEA – Patricia Bingham
fsdir@hotmail.com
(606) 337-5990

UKREA – Juanita Spangler
juanitaspangler1962@gmail.com
(606) 634-87671

Got a Few Extra Minutes...

Lisa Petrey-Kirk

If I had a dollar for every time I've heard that over my 33 years as a middle school teacher, I would be writing this on the balcony of my condo overlooking the ocean! Instead, I am sitting at a dining room table piled high with newspapers, cards, half-finished projects, books to read and well... I'm sure you get the picture. And I am willing to bet you have a similar spot in your house. Sitting here, I can fondly remember but can't count the times during those 33 years I heard someone say "**I can't wait to retire**", usually after a difficult class or a long faculty meeting. And those magical words brought smiles, visions of sleeping late, travel to some distance vacation spots and a land devoid of bathroom and parking duty.

Reality check.... "retired" teachers are the busiest people I know! There are clubs, part time jobs, grandchildren, volunteer activities and the list goes on. But if you listen for very long in any group of retirees, you hear two things...they still have a passion for the profession and they miss the kids! So back to my original question...Got a Few Extra Minutes?

A new business item passed the floor at the KEA-R annual meeting last year. Written by two teachers who still love the profession and missed the kids, It established a pilot program to form a group working directly with educators (years 1 thru 5) to guide, mentor and develop their abilities as effective leaders. The program would mirror the now defunct KTIP and offer mentorship to those who need a support system to make it through those crucial first few years of teaching. Many districts offer a some failsafe program for their year one teachers but that often falls to the wayside in follow-up years or for those who early in their careers move schools or districts.

Unfortunately, **a new reality exists** as teacher shortages are fast becoming the norm in Kentucky and this reality is beginning to take a toll on students. At the beginning of the year, KDE listed almost 5,000 open positions throughout the state. In many cases, these openings have been filled with well-meaning adults who are unfortunately unprepared and lack the strategies to be successful in their assigned areas. The National Education Association (NEA) has advocated for years that "high-quality mentors" are one of the two most important things "that make a difference in keeping new teachers in the classroom". Even the U.S. government agrees! A recent longitudinal study found that 10 % of new teachers do not return to the classroom and that amount escalates with 12 % in year three and as many as 17% in year 5. (You already know the other factor; competitive salaries of course.)

In step our retiree members! With successful full careers behind them, armed with an arsenal of experience, and having weathered the many changes in education trends; WE are the perfect mentors. Who better to help a new teacher with classroom control, time management, or acting as a "from the trenches" advisor, a touchstone, for those in the beginning of their career?

This program, **Better Beginnings, is all about building relationships** (aren't most things). An experienced educator assisting a new educator, a sharing of common concerns and problems and the sharing's of the successes, tiny and large, that make teaching the most important and rewarding of careers.

So here's how it would work. With the invitation of the district and principal of the school, educator's years one to five, who request a mentor, would be paired with a retiree who was experienced in their area and grade level. The two would meet and mutually begin to build a relationship. Together they would discuss concerns and determine what they

Continued next page

could best tackle together to help. The extent of the relationship and joint efforts would all be up to the two, boundaries and actions they both agree will be beneficial. Maybe it's coming in and watching a lesson and offer suggestions, or it could be providing lists of resources and materials to facilitate more learning. Maybe by providing a reading circle while the teacher works with a struggling student or candid conversations about classroom behaviors. Bulletin board suggestions for Halloween, ideas for holiday projects, suggestions for talking to parents at conferences or ways to get parents involved in classroom activities. Might even be the key to a successful fall festival booth. And maybe they just need someone who understands, to call every once and awhile and make sure they are okay. **All of those things that as retirees, we made a career of for years.**

As a volunteer you would be able to designate the county or district you would prefer to work and in the area in which you have expertise. You would NOT be a set of eyes for leadership, a substitute, an aide or a part of a "corrective action plan". **You WOULD be a mentor**, an advisor, a guide and a friend. No schedule, no requirements just the confines of the relationship you build with the educator.

When I first started in a middle school, Special Ed classroom, I remember how exciting and scared to death I was at one time. Then I meet Mr. Nelson. He had taught 30 years, I was in awe. He was in the next room and made it his goal to drop by my room most class breaks and at the end of every day. He was the glue who held me together that first year and several after. He doled out advice, suggestions and Cokes at will and I loved him for it. He told me I had great ideas, that I was making a difference and how to handle that trying student; he even gave me his home phone number when he retired. I thought about him many times over the years and even today marvel at what might have been different without his gentle guidance. That folks is how we build the profession, how we carry on and encourage those following us to carry on. It is how we continue to make a real difference.

So you Gotta a Few Minutes?

If this sounds like an opportunity right up your alley, or something you feel drawn to, contact your KEA-R board member. They have a volunteer list to collect your interest and information. The pilot will be in full swing by December with three districts who have signed on. Expect a report in April at the annual meeting and in future newsletters!

Districts: News & Notes (Cont.)

The Eastern KY Education Association – Retired met on Friday, October 4th at Jenny Willey State Resort Park. We heard from Colmon Elridge on the importance of our involvement with the upcoming statewide general elections. We have helped with phone banking, post card writing, letters of support for our local news media and attending as many functions as possible where our recommended candidates will be speaking. Letters of welcome and encouragement to participate are going out to all new retirees. We are making a concerted effort to assist the Aspiring Educators by donating funds to offset their local dues as well as contacting the college and university chapter advisors. All present were encouraged to support the Best Beginning Volunteer Program and recruit others to do the same. Our next meeting will be Monday, December 30th at 11:00 a.m. at Reno's Restaurant in Morehead. Watch the EKEA-Retired Facebook page often for updated information.

KEA-Retirees On Call (KEA-ROCs)

Some years ago, KEA-Retired created an initiative called KEA-Retirees On Call. These members agreed to help be "the daytime face" of KEA. When folks were needed in Frankfort, a call went out for ROCs to be there. With the legislative session coming, we would like to revive this group.

Do you want to help carry the KEA message to legislators?

Are you available on short notice?

Are you willing to attend legislative sessions and committee meetings?

Answering YES to any of these questions makes you a likely candidate to be a KEA-ROC. If you are interested in helping with this important initiative, please send your contact information to Kathryn.Whitlock@kea.org ASAP.

Highlights of KEA-Retired Board Meeting held Sept. 25, 2019

Approved the KEA-Retired committee appointments and charges. (Brenda McGown)

Approved the guidelines and application process for the newly named Tom Denton Memorial Scholarship. This was originally the KEA-Retired/Fred Hester Scholarship. (Patti Hester)

Approved the application process for the KEA-Retired Friend of Education Award. (Jim Sproul)

Approved the recommendations of the Best Beginnings Committee (previously New Business Item 1 as presented at the 2019 KEA-R Annual meeting) to pilot a mentoring process for teachers just beginning their careers. (Lisa Petrey-Kirk and LuAnn Asbury)

Received information as to changes in the under 65 health insurance program (KEHP) and the Medicare eligible health insurance program (MEHP) provided to TRS members. (Brenda McGown)

Colmon Elridge shared information relating to the campaigns of KEPAC recommended candidates.

Received a financial report showing the association had finished the year with a small positive balance. The books will be audited with a report provided at the December meeting.

Discussion was held around the issue of how best to monitor dues money, pay expenses, etc. (Elect a treasurer, appoint a treasurer or continue with this being the responsibility of the elected Vice President). This discussion will continue at the December board meeting.

The goals for the 2019-20 NEA-Retired grant were explained. Grants will be awarded at the end of October. The goals stress engagement of members with specific educational issues. (Brenda McGown)

Artie Marx shared the newsletter completion process.

Lisa Petrey-Kirk explained how expenses vouchers are to be completed.

Brenda McGown led a review of current KEA-Retired board policies.

Additional information pertaining to the Tom Denton Memorial Scholarship, the KEA-Retired Friend of Education Award, and the Best Beginnings Mentoring program appears elsewhere in this newsletter. Contacts for the various items appear parenthetically.



KEA-Retired/Tom Denton Memorial Scholarship Application 2019-20

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email address: _____

College or University attending:

(Circle one) Junior Senior MAT program

Expected year of Graduation: _____

KEA Aspiring Educator member? YES NO

Family member is a KEA or KEA-Retired member? YES NO

Plan to teach in Kentucky upon graduation? YES NO

Along with this completed application, the student should submit:

- A transcript from his/her college verifying G.P.A., number of credit hours completed, and that he/she is enrolled in a program leading to a Kentucky teaching certificate
- A resume including education, work experience, leadership roles, community service, and special talents
- Two letters of reference, one professional and one personal
- An essay (500-700 words) explaining why the student is applying for this scholarship and why he/she wants to be a teacher. This essay may include unique endeavors he/she pursued or any special circumstances or obstacles he/she has overcome.

Application and supporting documents must be received in the KEA-Retired office by 5:00 p.m. eastern, January 6, 2020. The information may be mailed, hand-delivered, emailed or faxed to the KEA-Retired office:

Address: KEA-Retired, 401 Capitol Ave., Frankfort, KY 40601**Email:** KEA-RScholarship@KEA.org**Fax number:** (502) 696-8907

Recipients will be selected by the KEA-Retired selection committee. Successful applicant(s) will be notified of their award by March 1, 2020.

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www.kea.org

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KEA-Retired

TODAY/TOMORROW

Reminder.....

*The KEA-Retired
Annual Meeting
will be held
Wednesday, April 1,
2020, noon at the
Downtown Marriott
in Louisville. Mark
your calendar.
Officers will be
elected as well
as a KEA Board
Member. More
info in the
next
newsletter.*

