

# Newsletter

Affiliated with National  
Retired Teachers Association

*“To Serve, Not to be Served”*



**South Dakota  
Retired  
Teachers  
Association**  
[www.sdrta.net](http://www.sdrta.net)

November 2009, Vol. 40 No. 1

## *Update on South Dakota Retirement System*

Over 6900 retired teachers receive benefits from the SD Retirement System so having Rob Wylie, executive director of the SD Retirement System, speak at unit meetings is appreciated. This fall he has shared some of the following information:

1. Maintaining financial security (not social, economic or political awareness) is the number one job.
2. SDRS wants to help members recognize that personal financial planning is essential.
3. State law mandates that a funded ratio below 80% is to be reported to the Governor and legislature. Because the rate in 2009 has dipped below that figure, there are some items being considered as corrective actions.

Those corrections actions may include implementing minor actuarial changes and eliminating current subsidies for members who return to work after retirement. Also being considered are eliminating the pro-rated COLA paid benefits in the first year of retirement and all pro-rated benefits. The COLA could be reduced from 3.1% to 2.1% for a period of time.

All options will continue to be reviewed, and final recommendations made to the legislature in December, 2009. Any changes will take place July 1, 2010.

## *From Teachers to Travel Planners Bus Trips Continue*

by Diana Glover

**“We wouldn’t do it if it wasn’t fun,”** . . . quoting Pat and Annette, bus trip planners.

**“Thank goodness you are still having fun!”** . . . quoting delighted travelers.

**Five years ago at the summer workshops, Shirley Eisnach of Pierre, then-president of South Dakota Retired Teachers Association, “threw out” the idea of bus trips.** Two retired teachers from Watertown, Pat Johnson and Annette Belkonen, took the challenge and charged ahead. Shortly after Thanksgiving of that



*In Winnipeg Annette introduced Bola, an immigrant from Nigeria. She presented music and told stories of her homeland.*

year, 2004, a busload of South Dakota retired teachers and friends were on their way to Minneapolis for the Chanhassen Dinner Theatre, Minnesota Landscape Arboretum and the Mall of America. The fun had just begun!

**There have now been 199 travelers, (33 of them on 4 or more trips), 11 trips and 12 buses, 6 states and one foreign country in the 5-year history of SDRTA bus trips.** So how do these two women, one a former rodeo barrel-racer and the other a whiz at Scrabble, divide the work and find the energy to be tour planners?



*Trip planners Annette Belkonen and Pat Johnson invited the Winnipeg city guide to be an ambassador to South Dakota.*

*Continued on page 2*

*See you in Pierre!  
Jan 26 - Lobby Day • May 4 & 5 - Convention*

*March Bus Trip Registration - Page 7  
Essay Contest Guidelines - Pages 10-11*

Pat says, "It is not a formal split of the responsibilities, but I handle the money, and Annette talks on the bus. Of course, when we had 2 buses going to see 'Little House on the Prairie', I had to talk on the bus. However, there will be no more trips with 2 buses at a time!"

Annette adds, "We both make calls to our travelers, and we both make contacts with people at our destinations. We don't always agree. Sometimes we have to hash it over and after a week come to a decision. I check out everything ahead of time, even the number of stalls in a bathroom of a fast-food restaurant where we may stop."

There have been trips to Pella, Iowa for the Tulip Festival, the Black Hills, Lincoln, Nebraska, one called "Circle Wisconsin", another which included St. Croix River and the Guthrie Theatre, 2 to Minneapolis and 4 to Winnipeg for the Folklorama Festival. Two sisters from Redfield, Mildred Ratigan and Viola Hardie, have gone on 9 of those trips, twice to Winnipeg. Several others have been repeat customers many times over. They have found a good deal and know it!

For their planning and carrying out the trip, Pat and Annette receive no payment other than the trip itself. Because Pat "crunches the numbers" so well, and they both "work deals", the trips are bargains. Even with that tight planning, there have been profits from the trips, sometimes quite a bit and sometimes small, but at this point SDRTA has profited well by them.



*Vivian Shaver of Sioux Falls was welcomed by Rama the Llama*

As travel planners, Annette and Pat have been invited on FAMTours, FAM for FAMiliarization. These tours are sponsored by local visitor and convention bureaus so tour guides can learn what's out there for travelers. "They have definitely been helpful," says Annette. "On the 2 trips to Wisconsin, we used most of the ideas we picked up on the FAM tour".

They also attend the Foreman Travel Show in Sioux Falls each year, and the Foreman Bus Company of Miller, SD has supplied the transportation for most of the trips. With Foreman being in the middle of the state, there are not so many "deadhead" miles. As much as possible, Pat and

Annette will "stay loyal to Doyle" (Foreman owner). Trips have originated in Pierre with pick-ups in Watertown or Sioux Falls depending on which direction the destination is. It should also be noted that the Forelle Bus Company of Pierre has "stepped up to the plate" when a smaller bus was needed for the Black Hills and Lincoln trips.

Foreman allows Pat and Annette to request drivers, and some like Jeff Olson become one of the "family". Drivers



*Jeff Olson, bus driver enjoyed bannock at the Native Cultural Center near Winnipeg*

are always included in the meals and with tickets to the entertainment.

"We are down-home with our meals and entertainment," says Annette, "and we consider eating an entertainment. We do watch the prices, but try to provide

some new eating experiences such as Ruby and Cordelia's Fine Tea Room and the Governor's Mansion in Lincoln. We always look for some kind of entertainment, but don't want it to be expensive. And we try to include some experience in nature." That will surely be the case with the March, 2010, trip to Nebraska when the sand hill cranes will be observed during their migration northward. (See registration form on page 7).

There are the special moments which are so memorable to Pat and Annette, like when a man asked for a pumpkin scone recipe, a first-time traveler is enthralled with an English garden and the interchange between people as they realize the connections they have. Pat tells about her special moment. "I walked across the street from where we were stopped. I went into a used clothing store and bought a wonderful leather coat. I wear it a lot and just love it!"

What a fortuitous statement it was when Shirley Eisanach suggested SDRTA bus trips! She sometimes scrambled helping Pat and Annette fill a bus, but they have made a dream come true. Pat and Annette notice that young retirees mix well with the "seasoned" travelers, and they all look forward to seeing each other at convention time. For this, the association is stronger, and for this, members of SDRTA are thankful for talented travel planners and 199 passengers. If you are someone who hasn't "jumped on the bus", you could make it 200!

## **SDRTA Officers Elected and Appointed Officers, 2008 – 2010**

**President** W. Allen Price  
2015 Burlington Blvd.  
North Platte, NE 69101  
308-221-2121  
apricew@charter.net

**Past President** Dr. Charollene Coates  
6662 Wellington Dr.  
Rapid City, SD 57702  
605-348-1958  
charollene@rap.midco.net

**President Elect** Patricia Johnson  
1226 E Kemp Ave.  
Watertown, SD 57201  
605-886-8756  
sdpjohnson@mac.com

**Vice President** Lyle Kemnitz  
1011 1st Ave W  
Mobridge, SD 57601  
605-845-3839  
lkemnitz@westriv.com

**Treasurer** Art Shaver  
908 E 61st St.  
Sioux Falls, SD 57108  
605-338-3358  
ashaver2@sio.midco.net

**Secretary** Donna Fischer  
308 E 21st St.  
Yankton, SD 57078  
605-665-9252  
ddfisch@vyn.midco.net

**Membership** Bill and Cathy Zubke  
417 Broadway  
Watertown, SD 57201  
605-886-8637  
calz45@hotmail.com

**Community/Health Service**  
Marrietta Catlin  
321 N Taylor  
Pierre, SD 57501  
605-224-7815  
mcatlin@pie.midco.net

**Newsletter** Diana Glover  
4781 Sturgis Rd  
Rapid City, SD 57702  
605-787-4631  
rdglover@rapidnet.com

**Legislation** Wyland Borth  
110 W Prospect #E  
Pierre, SD 57501  
605-224-5194  
WyAuBo@aol.com

**Executive Director** Shirley Eisnach  
1907 Brighton Court  
Pierre, SD 57501  
605-224-2228  
deisnach@pie.midco.net

# *From the President's Desk*



*President W. Allen Price*

**Historical Places! Historical People!  
By-laws Changes! Great Speakers!  
Tour of the Capitol! Election of  
Officers!**

## **Dear Fellow Retired School Personnel:**

**Greetings from North Platte,  
Nebraska!** Most of you heard that I was moving down here for a few months. Well, we did it on September 18 – 19. Since then we've been to Hayes Center, NE, Casper, WY and St. Francis, KS to see granddaughters play in volleyball games.

**Perhaps you heard, too, of the 15" of snow North Platte received last weekend (the official amount was 13.8").** Fortunately, we weren't here when that snow came, but we were out on the highway in some pretty heavy snow. Now the snow is practically gone, and we are looking at temperatures in the 70's for the weekend. I hear bits and pieces about parts of South Dakota getting some pretty good snows and nasty weather, too. Isn't it too early?

When I met with many of you at the Leadership Workshops in August I said that I would be resigning my presidency and turning the reins over to our Vice-President Lyle Kemnitz. Well, several of the board members encouraged me to stay on to finish out my term which ends May 31, 2010. They said they would be willing to help with any chores I needed to "delegate" that I couldn't get done from North Platte. So I'm giving it a try. Except for some problems with sending emails, things are going pretty well. Please bear with us.

The "headlines" above are an indication of what to expect at the **SDRTA Convention May 4 –5, 2010 in Pierre.** Our theme is "Historical People and Places of South Dakota". John Timm of Sioux Falls has agreed to do his impersonation of Arthur Mellette, first Governor of South Dakota. Sylvia Henkin, a prominent Sioux Falls philanthropist, has agreed to be our banquet speaker. Sylvia recently had a book published about her life. She is hilarious as those who attended the SFARTA meeting in August can testify!

**2010 is the 100th anniversary of our Capitol building in Pierre so Shirley Eisnach has planned a pre-convention tour of the edifice to be conducted by a couple of Pierre retired teachers.** There will be a vote on a by-laws change and election of officers.

**I am sure you will want to be part of all the activities so please join us in Pierre May 4 and 5, 2010.**

*Let's hope fall returns.*

**Cordially, Your President  
W. Allen Price**

*The idea of an elevator statement is to ensure that all members have a common focus and give a consistent message when communicating about SDRTA.*

**– ELEVATOR STATEMENT –**

America and South Dakota were built on the principle that everyone has a right to a good education. You can probably remember how a teacher, coach, principal or other educator touched your life. That's why I support South Dakota Retired Teachers Association. Today, South Dakota's ability to attract and keep good educators is at risk. South Dakota Retired Teachers Association mentors new teachers, tutors children, promotes lifetime learning and works in the legislature to make sure educator benefits are competitive. Join us!

## **Eisnach Attends ASRTE Meeting In Chicago**

by Shirley Eisnach, SDRTA Executive Director

SDRTA Executive Director Shirley Eisnach attended the annual meeting of the Association of State Retired Teacher Executives in Chicago August 3-5. Probably the most beneficial part of the meeting for Eisnach was getting to know the other executive directors and having the opportunity to learn of concerns and successes in the various states. ASRTE also provides South Dakota with a network of state directors with similar problems and questions.

Megan Hookey, NRTA Vice-President, updated the attendees on changes at NRTA, including a reduction of three staff members. In the future, the “service/volunteerism” component of AARP will be emphasized. State Support and Community Outreach staff member Rebecca Villarreal told of community service projects in various states and how some have grown into statewide projects embraced by all local units. An electronic version of the new AARP volunteer handbook is available online.

In addition to the business meeting, sessions dealt with the California member research survey, recruitment of new members, and pensionomics (measuring the economic impact of public pension plans). For the “economic footprint” of SD pension recipients, go to [www.nirsonline.org](http://www.nirsonline.org).

The 2010 annual meeting of ASRTE will be held in St. Louis August 2-5.

## **IT'S TIME TO CHECK YOUR PART D PRESCRIPTION DRUG PLAN**

by Shirley Eisnach, Medicare Navigator

Open enrollment for Medicare Part D is November 15-December 31 every year. I cannot stress enough how important it is to check your plan *each* year to make sure you are enrolled in the plan that is *best* for you. Part D is different than other insurance plans; you may need to change plans and/or carriers *every* year. Premiums and deductibles change, drugs on the companies' formularies change, and your medication may have changed. It is important that each person check the Medicare computer program every November to see if there is a more reasonably-priced program that will cover his/her prescription needs.

To find the plan that best fits your situation, go to [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov) and click on Medicare Prescription Drug Plans, 2010 Plan Data. You may also contact SHIINE (Senior Health Information and Insurance Education) for assistance. Under the SHIINE website, click on “Contact Us” to find the names of the contact persons in eastern, central, and western South Dakota. There are volunteers just like me ready to assist you, if you are not comfortable running the computer program yourself.

In the four years that Part D has been required, it is not that unusual for a beneficiary to have changed programs or carriers each year. You must look out for yourself and your pocketbook!

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## **AARP Lobby Day 2010**

by Cathy McLeer

It has been an incredibly busy year for AARP! While health reform remains the hot topic and the focus of our current activities, we're already looking ahead to 2010. We hope you'll save the date for Lobby Day 2010 in Pierre. Over the past several years thanks to great participation by many SDRTA members, our Lobby Day has grown into a tremendously successful event. Last year, more than 220 members and volunteers flooded the Capitol, and we're looking forward to seeing you all in Pierre once again.

Lobby Day 2010 has been set for January 26th, and will be held in the Capitol rotunda. Once again, AARP SD will provide bus transportation from designated locations, lunch and a light meal for the return trip. Bus schedules, pick up locations and reservation line will be set at the end of December, and we encourage those who are interested in attending to visit [www.aarp.org/sd](http://www.aarp.org/sd) for details and information on reserving your spot. There is no cost to attend.

If you've attended in the past and received a red fleece vest, please wear it again. A sea of red in the House and Senate gallery makes huge impact! Those who have attended previous lobby day events will receive a pin to wear on their red vests. A limited number of vests will be available only for those who have not attended an AARP SD Lobby Day in the past.

Additionally, if you are interested in receiving weekly legislative updates from AARP on the key issues we're working on during the session, please email us at [sdaarp@arp.org](mailto:sdaarp@arp.org) and ask to be added to our legislative update list. We're also offering an exciting new way to receive legislative updates by phone. We've been providing short, pre-recorded phone messages to keep folks up-to-date on health reform issues. We'd hope to continue offering these updates during the legislative session. If you would like to receive health reform updates and legislative updates via phone, please call our office toll free, 1-866-542-8172, and leave a message with your name and phone number to be added to our list. Thanks for all you do, and we'll see you in Pierre!

# BYLAWS CHANGES

*These proposed bylaws changes will be voted upon at the May 5, 2010 business meeting*

## ARTICLE IV. DUTIES OF OFFICERS

### Section 5. Treasurer

d. Delete the words “and appropriately invest such funds on hand not needed for the current operation of this Association.”

It will now read:

d. Shall serve as a member of the Budget Committee.  
g. Shall also have the following duties:

Delete the current sections 1 and 2. Replace with the following wording:

1. Shall appropriately invest funds not needed for the current operation of the Association. Such investments are to be held in certificates of deposit or dividend bearing certificate accounts of reputable banking or savings and loan institutions.

2. Shall transfer funds from investment accounts to the General Operating Fund if it becomes necessary to meet current obligations, fund special projects or balance future budgets.

**PURPOSE:** Makes treasurer’s duties less complicated and allows for transfer of funds if needed.

## STANDING RULES

### ARTICLE II. DUES

#### Section 3. Delete current wording.

Replace with the following:

Dues are delinquent October 31.

**PURPOSE:** Makes it clear when SDRTA dues are considered delinquent.

# South Dakota’s 2009 Andrus Award Winner

## Congratulations

### Marrietta Catlin

Marrietta Catlin of Pierre has been selected as the 2009 American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) Andrus Community Service recipient from South Dakota. This award is AARP’s most prestigious award to recognize outstanding AARP volunteers in every state who are making a difference in their communities.



“Those who bring sunshine to the lives of others cannot keep it from themselves,” (Sir James Barrie) is Marrietta’s favorite quote and she has adopted it as her personal philosophy.

Marrietta’s commitment to service touches young and old with a very sweet hand. She is a volunteer kindergarten tutor and “Reading Buddy” for first graders, helps with the weekend backpack food program for needy students at the elementary level, helps with student health screenings at the high school, does entertainment at the nursing homes and senior center and graciously helps out at the food pantry when needed. She helps with serving and clean-up at the weekly potluck dinners at the local senior citizen’s center, lines up weekly entertainment at the senior center and plays saxophone in a big band called Over Forte’ which donates its proceeds for music scholarships for local students. She frequently uses children’s literature with creative activities and research to remind seniors that working together we can make a big difference in our world.

Her leadership has a statewide impact where she serves the South Dakota Retired Teachers Association (SDRTA), the Honored Women Educators of South Dakota, PEO Sisterhood and has assisted with the Senior Games. She leads the SDRTA’s Community/Health Services, writes health research columns for the state newsletter and keeps SDRTA’s members up to date on current health and service issues. She is first in line to welcome hundreds of AARP’s volunteers to the annual Lobby Day at the State Capitol and helps coordinate annual Days of Service for the state retired teacher units.

Three separate individuals living in three different communities across the state took the time to submit nominations for Marrietta to be South Dakota’s Andrus Award winner. All three nominations list outstanding contributions to her community and state in very substantial ways.

It is no surprise to those who know her and have been inspired by her that Marrietta loves sunflowers. She truly strives to bring sunflowers to all she meets and serves.

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## Honoring Ernie Van Gerpen



LaRee Mayes

On July 21, Erie Van Gerpen of Rapid City was honored at an open house at the Highmark Federal Credit Union. He was one of the founders of Highmark. It began in 1940 from a closet under the stairway of Rapid City High School (now Dakota Middle School). He is a member of the Black Hills unit and has served extensively at both the state and local levels.

## COMMUNITY SERVICE

*Carpe Diem* (a Latin phrase meaning seize the day) is a term very appropriate for volunteering in our SDRTA Units. We have all heard the old phrase “Today is the first day of the rest of our life.” We all realize we cannot change yesterday and we do not know what tomorrow will bring so TODAY is the only day we have control of. How do we seize our todays and make a difference in our communities?

When I read the With Our Youth and Other Volunteer Hours Reports from unit community service chairs each April, I am extremely proud to be a retired teacher. Some of the projects are on-going year after year, some are big projects, some are little projects, some are projects working with other groups but they all make a big impact in our communities.

One of the things I have learned in volunteering the past few years is, small things really do matter. When volunteering, I have noticed that smiles are contagious, that there is a time for love and sharing from the heart, that being positive and optimistic makes all things in life seem brighter and that sometimes instead of questioning “why?” and not getting things done, why not ask “why not?” and get things done.

As most of you know, I love sunflowers. They are just a simple flower that I have loved from childhood. Their bright yellow color makes me feel happy inside. A field of sunflowers reminds me of the sunny and bright students I had the privilege of teaching. A number of years ago I received a birthday card from a friend who is now deceased with a quote on it that I have tried to live by since retiring. “Those that bring sunshine to the lives of others cannot keep it from themselves.” (Sir James Barrie)

So seize today and go out and make a difference in our world with your volunteering. You in turn will benefit from the “sunshine” brought into your life from volunteering.

Keep up the good work! I look forward to receiving your local unit community service reports next April 2010. Until then, *Carpe Diem*.

## HEALTH TIPS

### **EVERY STEP COUNTS SO START COUNTING TODAY**

It is a proven fact that one of the reasons Americans are living longer is that they are in better physical condition than were their parents. We are slowly becoming more aware of the need to *exercise*. However, the 50 plus adult’s physical capabilities and chronic diseases makes this group’s needs different than those of a younger person.

For the past couple years I have accompanied my husband to the South Dakota Senior Games. This year the games were held in Watertown for ages 50 to 90 plus. I am always amazed at the determination of the many older men and women who compete at the games. They truly are an inspiration that *every step does count* so let’s you and I get motivated and start counting aloud or better yet, get a step counter and start moving.

The [www.SeniorJournal.com](http://www.SeniorJournal.com) website has some physical tips for us to get started. Check with your doctor before starting any fitness program.

At first choose an activity that you enjoy and do it regularly.

Start slowly. Exercise with a buddy and you are more likely to exercise regularly. Set some specific short terms goals such as:

1. I will walk 5 mornings a week for 15 minutes. Later on, set several long terms goals that perhaps you cannot do now but with a little more effort will be able to do soon.
2. Decide if you are going to develop a fitness program on your own or invest in a facility to do a program.
3. Make choices to move FORWARD. You may need to decide what you are willing to give up for exercising.
4. Wearing the right shoes is important for foot comfort as well as support for doing physical activities.
5. If an activity hurts, don’t do it but replace that activity with one that does not cause you pain.
6. Remember that EVERY STEP DOES COUNT so move as much as possible when on the phone, on the computer or during TV commercials by stretching, walking in place, raising your arms, tapping your feet, moving your shoulders, sit and stand, etc.

So starting today, let’s get to counting- 1-2-3-4-5.  
Now don’t you already feel more alive?

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## Information from Megan Hookey

### Vice-President of NRTA: AARP’s Educator Community

#### Data on Retired Educator (Teachers) Associations Across the Country

1. State membership dues range from \$95 a year to \$5 a year.
2. There are 620,000 members nationwide
3. 92% of state associations are incorporated as a non-profit organization
4. 76% of associations have an annual convention; nine have bi-annual conventions and 3 do not host a state convention
5. Members report that they mostly value association work on retirement and pension issues
6. 90% of the associations regularly collaborate with AARP

#### Reports Available

A tip sheet and a report on managing financial assets are available from the AARP Public Policy Institute. The tip sheet, “Money Matters: Spending Down Your Assets in Retirement” offers insight on how to plan your spending so that your assets last as long as you do. The complementary report, “Making Your Nest Egg Last a Lifetime” provides information on considerations needed to convert savings into a stream of income that lasts throughout retirement. The report can be downloaded at [www.aarp.org/research/ppi](http://www.aarp.org/research/ppi) and free copies of the tip sheet are available from NRTA.

*Email [gruiz@aarp.org](mailto:gruiz@aarp.org) to request copies.*

*To request copies by phone - 202-434-2385.*

# Have a "Grand" Time – Cranes, Trains & Treasures!

## SDRTA Trip – March 22<sup>nd</sup> - 26<sup>th</sup>, 2010

Looking for some early springtime adventures in 2010? Come hear the cranes! Come see the trains! Come find the treasures! The Grand Island/Kearney areas of Nebraska will have all those things for us March 22-26, 2010. Even though Mother Nature is unpredictable, our Nebraska friends are willing to adjust our schedules if necessary.

Approximately 500,000 sandhill cranes migrate through the Platte River area each year in what National Geographic magazine named one of North America's two greatest natural wildlife phenomena (the other being the caribou migration in Alaska). You will have many opportunities to view the cranes (including from a blind at sunrise or sunset, or from a bridge). You will also meet expert naturalists who can answer any questions you have about this incomparable birding experience.

In Grand Island we have also arranged a tour of the Hornady bullet factory and visits to area art attractions including a restored 1930's art deco theater, a clock service to learn how to care for your heritage time pieces, Prairie Winds Art Center, Heart of the Country, & Heartland Antique mall, and more. Also dining at several of Grand Island's unique restaurants for local flavor and historic flare!

We will spend one day in Kearney at the Great Platte River Road Archway Monument. It traces the history of communication and transportation in the USA. An expert will share the story of Nebraskans who are growing rare varieties of corn and restoring them to the Pawnee in Oklahoma. Cookbook collectors and Cabela fans will find additional treasures in Kearney.

This trip will originate in Sioux Falls and pick up passengers at points you request along I-90. The Pierre area & West River passengers will need to join us at Vivian. We then continue to Winner for lunch and our final pick up of passengers before continuing to Grand Island.

**Due to the fact that the cost of the bus is the same whether it originates in Sioux Falls or Pierre, the cost per person will be \$520 (based on double occupancy) regardless of where along I90 or in Winner you join the bus. A special discount of \$20 will be given to those who are SDRTA members.** Special rates are also available for single occupancy. This includes all bus transportation, 4 nights lodging, 4 breakfasts, 4 dinners & 5 lunches, all admissions, taxes, and fees. An itinerary will be sent to participants in February.

We must have at least 32 participants to make this trip feasible. Reservations will be accepted on a first paid basis. **A deposit of \$50/person must be received by December 15, 2009 with the remainder due by February 15, 2010.** Checks should be made out to the Watertown Area Retired Teachers Association (WARTA) and mailed to Pat Johnson, 1226 East Kemp, Watertown, SD 57201.

If you have questions you may call or email Pat Johnson at 886-8756, email [sdpjohnson@mac.com](mailto:sdpjohnson@mac.com); or Annette Belkonen at 882-5937.

### Registration for the 2010 SDRTA Cranes, Trains, & Treasures Trip March 22-26, 2010

I will be joining the SDRTA Tour at  Sioux Falls  Vivian  Other

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of emergency contact: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Please check one of the following:  SDRTA member  non-member

Please check your choice of **one** of the following:

Early morning blind visit  Evening blind visit  Evening bridge viewing

I would like an additional crane viewing for an additional cost:

Early morning blind visit (\$30)  Evening blind visit (\$30)  Evening bridge viewing (\$10)

I have enclosed a check for \$50/per person to hold my reservation and understand that I will need to send a check for the remainder by **February 15<sup>th</sup>, 2010**

All rooms are no smoking rooms with 2 beds.

If double occupancy, please indicate with whom you will be rooming: \_\_\_\_\_

Please check if you would prefer a single room.

# ~ BUS TRIPS ~

## Capitol to Capitol Trip, May 2009

by Harry and Florence Johnson, Watertown

SD Retired Teachers' bus trip - Capital to Capital- was filled with fun, friends, and food. Many thanks to Annette Belkonen and Pat Johnson for planning an interesting and varied trip.

As is often the situation, the best of plans can go awry! We wondered how many other groups had eaten a delicious lunch at the governor's mansion and left without paying? Or had a UFO fly by the bus window? You must ask one of the 24 travelers about those experiences.

In just four days of fun-filled adventure, we were able to visit the Lied Conference Center and Arbor Tree Farm in Nebraska City, have High Tea with Miss Ruby at Ruby and Cordelia's Fine Tea Room in Lincoln, visit and sample delicious licorice at Licorice International in Lincoln as well as tour the historic Nebraska State Capitol, the Governor's mansion, attend a showing of Grace Snyder's quilts and lecture on Chintz fabrics at the Quilt Museum on the UNL campus, and visit the Agricultural Research Farm also at UNL in Lincoln. Add to and mix in with all these activities the fabulous eating at unique restaurants.

The trip home was as interesting as we 'old retired teachers' visited the Ashfall Fossil Fields State Park near Orchard, Nebraska.

As we got off the bus, arms loaded with apple juice, licorice, native plants and hydroponically grown tomatoes and cucumbers, we all agreed it was a totally terrific trip with Pat and Annette.



*Harry and Florence Johnson are shown here on a Wisconsin trip when they celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary*

## Winnipeg Trip Earns an "F"

by Jim and Jeri Costlow, Rapid City

Food, friends, fun and fastastic Folklorama are just a few "F" words that describe our wonderful trip to Winnipeg, Canada with Pat Johnson and Annette Belkonen.

Each meal was entertaining and unique. Dinner the first night was a delightful way to get acquainted with fellow teachers from various parts of South Dakota. Everyone was entertained by the juggling skills and nimble fingers of the Ichiban's chefs. From there the food continued to delight the palette with a sample of cuisine from countries such as Scandanavia, Serbia, India, Israel, Russia, Mexico, Belgium, Caribbean and Ireland. We enjoyed an appetizer, or main meal or dessert as each of the nine pavilions. We attended three pavilions each evening. We also sampled Indian fry bread and natural berry jelly. We enjoyed pancakes by the Marsh and a sumptuous "low calorie" lunch at the Old Spaghetti Factory. It was amazing that the people at the Mennonite Village were not obese judging from the lunch they served. Last, but definitely not least, was Bill Zubke's fantastic fudge. We enjoyed a wide variety of beverages as each pavilion provided an interesting selection.



*Jim and Jeri Costlow were first time travelers to Winnipeg*

The "fun" never ended! We were impressed by the quality of entertainment provided at each of the pavilions. We were equally impressed with the pavilions that provided the local talent as with the countries that offered professional groups. The variety was incredible, we enjoyed everything from "Almost ABBA" to forty-five minute version of River Dance. The cultural tours at the pavilions were informative and interesting, several pavilions sold items indigenous to their heritage. Our days were also filled with numerous activities: a canoe ride in a reclaimed marsh, an African adventure in an IMAX, a city tour, an English flower garden, and we heard ghost stories in a cemetery. We took a trip back in time in a Mennonite Village, toured the Royal Canadian Mint, and listened to discussions of First People's culture. To the delight of many, there was even time for shopping.

The final "F: is for the friendships that were formed. It was amazing to learn of the great variety of interests, backgrounds and hobbies of the 42 people that attended our trip. We cannot thank Pat and Annette enough for their excellent planning and organization. They made the entire trip an interesting and fun experience that is a treasured memory.

# ~ BUS TRIPS ~

## Winnipeg Bus # Two

by Don and Marian Van Cleave, Winner

Well, they did it again! SDRTAS tourist guides extraordinaire, Pat Johnson and Annette Belkonen, retired Watertown educators, took 41 travelers to Folklorama at Winnipeg, Canada August 9 – 13 where we had a great time. This was the 4th excursion (two this year) that Pat and Annette have organized for a visit to Winnipeg, 11 tours in all.



*The Van Cleavees have been on previous trips with SDRTA*

Variety would best describe this tour. The people on the bus were comprised of new visitors to Winnipeg's Folklorama as well as those who have made the trek before. It was fun to make new friends and renew old acquaintances from all over South Dakota. There were daily side trips to a variety of places such as a tour of the city of Winnipeg, a visit outside of Winnipeg to the Oak Hammock Marsh for a canoe ride, relaxing at the IMAX theatre, a visit to a Mennonite village – well, you get the idea. These kinds of side trips were in addition to the Folklorama itself. Those of us who were educators were quick to recognize Pat and Annette's mode of operation – keep the "students" busy and tired so we wouldn't get into trouble. It worked!

The Folklorama provided a variety of entertainment and food. The entertainment ranged from sophisticated to folksy while the food was definitely an introduction to various cultures. The pavilions we visited included the Indochina/Chinese, Ireland, Serbia, Indo Tropical Paradise, Italian, African/Caribbean, Canadian-Francais, El Salvador and Brazil.

Rounding out the schedule we went to church, did some shopping, visited the Canadian mint and grabbed quick naps on the bus. See what we mean by variety!

If you have never taken an SDRTA tour led by Pat and Annette, you have been missing something. So, what's next, gals?

## Winnipeg Doggerel

by Bill Zubke

Early risers bring their best—the group from Pierre and further west.  
At Hy-Vee we complete the troop—these 40 form and awesome group.

With Jeff the driver—work sublime--we started trek up 29.  
To Winnipeg our final goal, it's Folklorama and our role

Of tourist master; learn and play—to cram the most in every day.  
It's suite for us for four nights swell, in French the Place Louis Riel.

On Monday morning to the marsh, the weather holds, it is not harsh.  
The Tipi talk, some info new, then up the creek in our canoe.

To Africa in IMAX deep, 'twas long for us who did not sleep.  
Then rest a bit? No time to stop, it's countries three to where we'll hop.

In Scandia there's no casaba, but thankfully there's Almost ABBA.  
Then Tatiana—Serbian—demands respect from every man.

The night we end in Indian style with mango cream and show worthwhile.  
It's off we go with spinning heads to find our way to comfy beds.

Too soon it's morn. For blues? The cure is Barbara—three hour tour.  
Then catcher make—it truly seems a crafty way to catch our dreams.

We're off again for this nights "whee"; just like before. . .in countries three.  
First Israel, todah, shalom—we don't see things like this at home!

It's Russia next with Balaclava's—the things she shook were not maracas!  
Then skirts did whirl and knives did go. We end our night in Mexico.

To Bola's stories we did rise—Nigeria now was our surprise.  
It's off to lunch—our schedule, tight. For eats? Our host? The Mennonite.

Our final night begins with treats of Belgian dance and good Pomme Frites.  
Caribbean was good to go with drums of steal and dance—limbo!

We end the night with Celtic feet—with fiddles fast and dancers sweet  
Our venues done, it's been the best. It's now Riel to get some rest.

The morning dawns, to home we're led—canola fields still dance in head  
Through customs smooth, with gas we fill. You know, I still can't see a hill.

Annette and Pat, you done real good! When change arose, you said we could.  
With smiles and words we do confess our thanks and praise—you are the best.

And to our friends with whom we've shared a smile—a laugh—some fudge prepared.

It's not the journey—nor the ends. It's whom you travel with my friends!



# 2009-2010 Essay Contest Guidelines

(Beginning in 2003 AARP and SDRTA have co-sponsored an annual Grandparent Essay contest for SD fifth graders to raise awareness of the more than 8,000 children in SD who live in grandparent-headed households.)

This information is also available on our [sdrta.net](http://sdrta.net) website.

**Subject:** “Why my grandparent should be the AARP SD Grandparent of the Year”  
A grandparent is defined as any older adult who fulfills a grandparenting or “senior citizen mentor” role for a child. A familial relationship is not necessary in order to meet this requirement.



**Eligibility:** Contest is for **5th graders** in public and private schools.

**Technical Requirements:** Essay must be an original work of the author, up to 500 words in length, be written in English, and include the components of a formal essay, e.g., introduction, supporting points and conclusion.

Essay must be submitted on white, lined 8” x 11” paper (standard size notebook paper), and be legibly hand-written by the author on one side only of the page. Only the **WINNING** essay from each school building is to be submitted to the local Retired Teachers’ Association (RTA) contact, along with Form A. The author’s name and school must also be written at the end of the essay.

**Judging Criteria & Awards:** Qualifying characteristics of nominee 60%, Creativity & Expression 20%, and Grammar, Form, & Neatness 20%.

Previous winning essays may be viewed at ([www.sdrta.net](http://www.sdrta.net)) - Grandparent Essay link.

## **Deadlines:**

School winner’s deadline: **February 1, 2010**

The school winner is chosen by 5th grade teachers from the participating school based on the judging criteria provided. The winning essay from each school must be received by the local RTA unit contact by the deadline provided. Form A MUST be attached to the school winner’s essay.

Unit winner’s deadline: **February 15, 2010**

Judging for the unit winner will be among all the school winners in that unit’s area. The unit winner is chosen by representatives of the local RTA unit. The winning essay from each unit, along with Form B, must be completed and sent to Marilyn Kratz, 2007 Ross St., Yankton, SD 57078, RTA Essay Committee Chairperson, by the deadline.

The top three essays in the local unit judging will receive first, second, and third place medals for their efforts from the AARP South Dakota office. If a unit has fewer than three schools from which to judge, medals will be provided according to the number of essays submitted for local unit judging. **NO participation certificates will be provided to units; only the top three essays will receive recognition.** If units choose to provide participation certificates, it will be a decision made and followed through by the local RTA unit.

The local unit should also indicate on Form B the number of medals they need (up to three). The Yankton RTA Essay Committee will then provide the AARP South Dakota office a list of participating units and the number of medals requested. The medals will then be given to the unit representatives at the SDRTA convention in May.

Regional judging: **March 1, 2010:**

The Yankton RTA will do the regional judging for the essay contest. AARP Regions are Southeast, Northeast, and West. The three regional winning essays, chosen by the Yankton RTA Essay Committee, will be submitted to the AARP South Dakota State Office by March 1, 2010. Forms A and C must be attached. The Yankton RTA Essay Committee will inform the regional winners that they have reached the finals of the essay contest.

**State finals judging: April 1, 2010:**

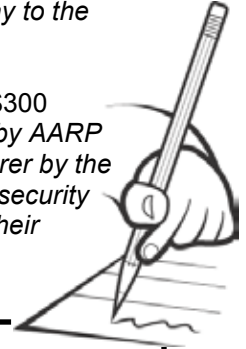
The AARP South Dakota office will establish a judging panel consisting of members of the AARP South Dakota Executive Council and the AARP South Dakota State Director.

The Yankton RTA Essay Committee will notify the first, second, and third place winners of their placing on or before April 15. The committee will invite the first place winner to read his/her essay at a noon luncheon on the second day of the SDRTA Convention in May. The winner is not required to attend the convention, but AARP South Dakota will pay mileage (for ONE car) and the noon meal for the student, parent, and grandparent(s) if they travel to Pierre for the award presentation.

The local units of the second and third place winners will receive their awards at the annual meeting so that they may be presented locally at the appropriate time.

The Yankton RTA Essay Committee will provide an electronic copy of the winning essay to the SDRTA website ([www.sdrta.net](http://www.sdrta.net)) following the May convention.

**Awards:** First place—a plaque and \$500 savings bond; Second place—a plaque and \$300 savings bond; Third place—a plaque and \$200 savings bond. All awards are provided by AARP South Dakota. Information for the Savings Bonds will be provided to the SDRTA treasurer by the Yankton RTA Essay Committee prior to May 1. This will include the names and social security numbers of the three winners, plus the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of their parents.



**Form A School Winner's Entry - Due Feb. 1**

To be completed by the 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher and attached to the winning essay from the school building. Send to the local RTA unit representative who contacted you about the contest.

Student \_\_\_\_\_ School \_\_\_\_\_

School Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher's Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

About how many 5<sup>th</sup> grade students in your building participated in the essay contest? \_\_\_\_\_

RTA Grandparent Essay Chairperson \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Form B Unit Winner's Entry - Due Feb. 15**

To be completed by the RTA Unit Grandparent Essay chairperson and attached to the winning essay, along with FORM A. Mail to: Marilyn Kratz, 2007 Ross St., Yankton, SD 57078, 605-664-5864, mkratz@iw.net

Form B completed by \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

RTA Unit \_\_\_\_\_

From the information on the forms received with the school winners, please total the number of schools and students involved in the contest in your area and complete the following questions.

How many schools in your RTA area participated in the contest? \_\_\_\_\_ About how many students from your RTA area participated? \_\_\_\_\_

AARP SD will furnish up to 3 medals. (1st, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> place) for your unit winners. You may pick them up at the SDRTA May Convention. How many medals are you requesting from your unit winners? \_\_\_\_\_



# A “Growing Green” Convention

by Diana Glover

Not everything about the 2009 spring convention of South Dakota Retired Teachers Association was “going green”, but there was enough to make me come home and begin using cloth grocery bags and reduce my driving time. And I now know what a LEED building is!



*Dr. James Stone, professor at South Dakota School of Mines and Technology at Rapid City, was very well received, and following his talk, a long line of people waited to speak personally with him. For sustainability of our planet, in the next 10 years, we must:*

- \* double our fuel economy or drive half as much
- \* make buildings more energy-efficient (LEED buildings)
- \* use more natural gas instead of coal

Black Hills unit members showed a slide show emphasizing how destructive plastic bags are to our earth. A follow-up activity taught us that a banana decomposes in 3 weeks, a leather boot in 40 years and an aluminum can in 200 – 500 years!

The Winner retired teachers gave a clever skit about the cloth napkins they had made and embroidered with WARTA. Some funny lines included how the napkins could be sold to the Watertown Area Retired Teachers Association.

The focus shifted as *Carolyn Elwood of Pierre* told how she had to ship in insects for her science classes while teaching in Barrow, the northern-most town in Alaska, in 2006-2007. Her husband coached the first football game north of the Arctic Circle of Alaska, and the yard lines were made with powdered milk.



Bill Zubke of Watertown demonstrated how he makes the delicious fudge that he shares at Retired Teacher gatherings. It was not only “spiced” with great chocolate, mint or blueberry flavor, but his wit and charm, too.

Megan Hookey, executive director of the National Retired Teachers Association, from Washington, DC gave the keynote address at the evening banquet. She also brought in the “green” message with encouraging teachers to recycle their talents and help mentor new teachers. Al Price, association president, presented awards (see page 13).

It is always good to be updated on our South Dakota Retirement System. Jim Hansen, Rob Wylie and Governor Michael Rounds, all of Pierre, commented on the stability of our system. “Despite the economic woes, our South Dakota system is the best in the nation,” shared Dr. Hansen who still serves on the National Roundtable Pension Board. Rob Wylie, executive director of the SD Retirement System, said that the conservative nature of our board has served us well. Governor Rounds said, “Let’s make sure the trustees and legislators know we want a consistent system, no ‘flash in the pan’”.

Thanks to Mary Tubandt, Redfield, and the South Madison Street Singers, Pierre, there was beautiful music. Lyle Kemnitz of Mobridge was in charge of the memorial service that recognized 54 deceased members.

Pat Gross, president of AARP-SD, spoke of the high priority health care is on the agenda for AARP. Leni Healy of the SD office of AARP talked about the “Create the Good” program. At the noon luncheon, Alikah Sesse of Vermillion was announced as the winner of the 5th grade essay contest “Why My Grandparent Should be Grandparent of the Year”. Because Alikah was able to attend, her essay was read by Donna Shafer of Vermillion.

“Going Green” made us aware of our present and future on this earth. Next year’s convention will take us back to the past, learning about South Dakota’s historical characters.



*(L) Cheryl Zimiga and Nancy May accepted the traveling trophy for the Black Hills Unit*

*(R) Convention goers were welcomed by the Pierre mayor, Laurie Gill*



## Memorial Service 2009

Hubert Ackman	Ethel M. McClain
Edith Anderson	Wilma Moore
Sylvia Barr	Hazel Morthland
Ivan Bartels	Theodora Nelson
Marlene Bottum	Cosette Nicholson
Archie Brecht	Carol Nigg
Joe Burcham	Ivy Nogle
Wilma Calhoun	Ruth Obermeyer
LeRoye Carlson	Mavis Olson
Laura M. Carriere	Frieda Person
Ina Casey	Fred Peterson
Lucile Distad	Aline Rich
Angeline Eining	Darlene Richardson
Rose Engberg	A.C. Roman
Lois Fenner	Loella E. Rose
Julia Finley	Frances M. Schmitt
June Goldhammer	John Schwartz
Grace Hammer	Esther Sidlo
Hazel Hanson	Maizie Solem
Luella Hewer	James Solon
Ada Hynes	Agnes B. Tennebow
Gladys J. Kier	Lillie Torbert
Neva LaChance	Heilia Trautman
Jorene Larson	Carol Winegar
Inez Levisen	Mabel Winegar
Dorothy Linette	Zane Zieman
Ivy Lobitz	Dorothy Zilverberg
Alice Lunsford	

Thanks to  
**Charles A. Maxon**  
Buffalo, SD  
for your contribution to  
SDRTA

Thanks to  
**Karen Schaefer**  
Rapid City, SD  
for your contribution to  
SDRTA

In Memory of  
*Friend and Colleague*  
**Myrna Coyle,**  
Rapid City  
from Diana Glover

## 2009 Award Winners

The following awards were given at the State Convention in May:

### Florence Krieger Award Winner

Charollene Coates of Rapid City was the winner of the prestigious Florence Krieger Award that is given to an SDRTA member who has contributed in significant ways to the association. Charollene served as president, 2006 – 2008, and she continues to serve on the board as past president. Florence Krieger was a long-time math teacher in Rapid City.



### **Reminiscent Teacher**

LaRee Mayes - Black Hills  
Virgil J. Binfet – Oahe (Mobridge)  
Helen Wrede - Black Hills  
Edith Siegrist - Vermillion  
Ardath Hinzman - Black Hills  
Rose Rush - Winner  
Rozella Glanzer – Huron  
Very Lilly - Aberdeen  
Clifford Earl Vitters – Milbank  
Ted Kneebone – Aberdeen

### **Outstanding Service**

Elizabeth Ruff - NHRTA (Spearfish)  
Donald Van Cleave - Winner  
Diana Glover - Rapid City  
Pat Johnson - Watertown  
Brenda Martens – SEARTA (Vermillion)

### **President's Award**

Pat Johnson and Annette Belkonen- Watertown  
Shirley Eisnach – Pierre  
Art Shaver, Sioux Falls  
James Peterson - Brookings

### **Grandparent Essay Winners 2009**

Alikah Sesse, Vermillion – 1st place  
Kaleigh Crumb, Rapid City – 2nd place  
Macy Denzer, Watertown – 3rd place

### **With Our Youth**

Watertown Area Retired Teachers  
Pierre Area Retired Teachers

### **Outstanding Service (Community Award)**

Aberdeen Retired Teachers  
Milbank Retired Teachers

# Unit News From Across The State

## Aberdeen Area

by Ted Kneebone

Aberdeen unit officers for 2009 – 2010 are:

Don Reshetar, President  
Don Vogt, President Elect and Program Arranger  
Ted Kneebone, Secretary  
Ron Johnson, Treasurer

Here is a list of our programs for the year:

October 3 – Lynn Lander, new city manager  
November 7 – Julie Stevenson, executive director of the Aberdeen Public School Foundation  
December 5 – Rev. Maryanne Nelson-Loekfe, pastor of Bethlehem Lutheran Church  
February 6 – Dr. Jim Smith, new president of Northern State University  
March 6 – two South Dakota legislators  
April 10 – Dr. Becky Guffin, assistant superintendent of Aberdeen Public Schools  
May 1 – Georgia Smith, executive director of Aberdeen Downtown Association

At the end of each business meeting one of our members will present a Golden Nugget, which is a short story or memory from their teaching or other life experience. This can be about the teacher's school, a memorable student, something funny or not-so-funny. If the presenter wants to have his or her anecdote published as part of our "Memories" book, they may submit it to our secretary.



Mary Thompson gives monthly health reports



Don Reshetar arranges the programs for meetings

Photos by Ted Kneebone

## Black Hills (Rapid City Area)

by Nancy May and Cheryl Zimiga

The Black Hills Retired Teachers Association sponsored a Spring Dinner and Memorial Service and Grandparent Essay Presentation Dinner at Canyon Lake Receptions in Rapid City on May 12th. One of our grandparent essay contestants, Kaleigh Crumb, placed second in the state competition.

Summer passed quickly, weather was strange, but our picnic at Old Storybook Island, August 28th, included 11 of our 16 new members.

We are pleased to welcome new members as we realize that strength in numbers is helpful at the state level when dealing with state legislators. The September meeting offered members the opportunity to learn about the state retirement investments from Rob Wylie from the South Dakota State Retirement System.

As autumn leaves rustled, October 13th, nearly 50 members toured the newly remodeled Dahl Arts Center in Rapid City, and then adjourned to a private home for a Harvest Soup and Bread Fundraiser luncheon hosted by BHRT Board Members. Since fall weather turned to winter weather over the weekend, hearty soups were appreciated.

One of the Day of Service events was Space Days at the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology on October 1st and 2nd. Volunteers assisted school children participate in hands on learning experiences on campus.

The topic at our November 10th meeting will be "The First Mrs. Korczak Ziolkowske," by Ruth Ann Karlin. Our Christmas Brunch will be at the Old Governor's Mansion on December 8th.

We look forward to a social and educational year, with well-planned programs by Gerri Larson and opportunities to see friends each month at meetings and events.



Enjoying the soup and bread lunch were Dorothy Lang, Judy Lage, Betty Stoner and Mary Hughes

## Brookings Area

by Louis Kubic

The Brookings Area Retired Teachers Association opened the 2009-2010 season with a luncheon meeting on Friday, September 25 at the Brookings Activity Center.



The newly-selected officers for the year are President Dave Peterson, Vice President Paula Tursam, Secretary Maurice Monahan and Treasurer Leon Bush. David Fiedler, principal of the new Camelot Intermediate School, was the speaker.



Monthly luncheon meetings will be held every 4th Friday of the month starting at 11:30 a.m. at the Brookings Activity Center. Following are the programs and presenters:

- October 20 – SD Retirement System – Rob Wylie
- November 20 – Life Long Learning – Harriet Swedlund
- January 29 – High School Jazz Choir – Denise Perry
- February 26 – McCrory Gardens-Additions by Martin Maca
- March 26 – Children’s Museum – Suzanne Hegg
- April 30 – Legislative Issues – Senator Pam Merchant
- May 28 – The Mongols – Jerry McClough

The purposes of BARTA that have been established are:

- 1.To promote the economic, social and professional status of retired teachers.
- 2.To promote the passage of legislation beneficial to the retired teachers.
- 3.To promote continued involvement of school retirees in community service and decision-making in the local community.
- 4.To encourage membership in the local and state RTA’s and in the NRTA division of AARP.
- 5.To present the image of aging as one of dignity, purpose and independence.

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## Huron Area

by Sharon Fuglsong

The Huron Area Retired Teachers held their first meeting on September 2 with several new members attending. Rhonda Kludt spoke to us about the Huron Back Program, and Retired Teachers gave a donation to the program.

*Members Donna Uttenhove, Verna Bates, Beulah Decker, Eva Bell Schnitzer and Rozella Glanzer helped with the donation of T-shirts. The shirts are given to a group that makes them into non-disposable diapers and takes them to Mexico on a yearly trip.*



*Three of our members represented “super teachers” in the Huron High School Homecoming parade. Bev Erdahl, Connie Cowing and Sharon Fuglsong were the float riders.*

## Madison Area

by Betty Beyer

The Madison Area Retired teachers have just had their first meeting this fall. We meet only six times a year, so it was fun to get together again.

Our first program was on Butterflies, given by Leland White. He showed us the stages of butterflies and how he raises them from an egg. It was very interesting.

We worked at Prairie Village in the library, as we do each August. It is fun to greet the people, as they come from all over the states. This year Allis Chambers was the big draw, and there were huge crowds.

One of our retired teachers, Millie Gross, was honored by SDSU. She was one of the Eminent Homemakers of the year.

We will bring food articles for food pantries at our December party and also bring warm coats and wraps to be given away. Our Pamida store helped us purchase green shopping bags so each member received one. In October, our guest speaker will be asking the group, ARE U GREEN? We will get tips on how to help save our environment.

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## Milbank Area

by Cliff Vitters

Following are the programs for the year to be held at the Pizza Ranch, 3rd Thursdays at 11:15 p.m.

- September 17- Boy and Girl State speakers Jeff Trapp and Amanda Lambrechts
- October 15- Whetstone Valley preserves/meat market
- November 19- Arthritis–Golden Living Center
- December 3- 2nd Annual Christmas Party
- January 21 – Nutrition by Julie Danielson
- February 18– Legislative Update by George Smith
- March 18 – Police Chief Boy VanVooren – His topic
- April 15 – Accordion Music by Earl Lundin
- May 20 – Grinding at the Windmill – provided the wind blows – Tim Stengel
- June 17 – Lunch in Twin Brooks, SD at the Bird Feeder
- July 15 – Social Event – A Big Surprise
- August 19 – Summer Picnic

We have begun a “Pocket Change” Project to help organizations in our community. A jar is put out at each meeting for members, if they wish, to empty their pockets of loose change. In the past two projects, MARTA has helped our Senior Citizens Center to purchase cards, dominoes game, and the Amsden School house on the Museum grounds to purchase window shades. This next project will be to purchase a bench (es) to be placed on the walking/biking trail being developed from windmill to other points of interests.

AARP Day of Service-Sept. 11 – 18 members donated cookies; 33 + dozen cookies; 7 members delivered to: 3 nursing homes; hospital/nutrition cart; clinic; library; police; sheriff; ambulance crew; city office.



*Milbank members gather for one of their monthly meetings*

We appreciate having a local member who will do the Tax Aide which will be offered in Philip and to surrounding communities. We had an entry in the Scottie Homecoming Parade.

## **Pierre Area**

by Jean Easland

Pierre Area Retired Teachers congratulates our own Marrietta Catlin on being the recipient of the 2009 Andrus Award for Community Service. Marrietta's contributions are many in her home community and beyond. She reminds us all that working together can make a difference. PARTA is very fortunate to have her leadership and support.

We had our National AARP Day of Service May 9th where we sorted food articles for the Postal Service Food Drive and placed them on shelves at the Food Pantry. There were approximately twenty who volunteered.

Our first meeting was September 22 with Kim Brakke representing Pierre Education Foundation. We had several new retirees joining our group. Future programs include: Junior Achievement, Oral Interp. students from Riggs HS, YMCA, Insurance Fraud, and other interesting programs.

Our focus this fall is helping with the Back Pack Program filling 200 food sacks per week for children to take home for the weekend. We are volunteering for this project in October and April. There are many volunteer projects in the community that we are always willing to help with.

## **Redfield Area**

by Mary Tubandt

Our unit has been meeting during the summer months. We do not meet Dec., Jan., Feb., and Mar. due to the weather. We collected paper products plus diapers from our members for the Crisis Center in Redfield at our September meeting. All members were called so we had a good attendance. At our September meeting, we had a travel talk. In October the Redfield Elementary principal will tell about new innovations being used.

## **Sioux Falls Area**

by Cathy Anderson

In May 2009, Harriet Wendt, Community Affairs Chairperson, coordinated the members of our group to staff Pioneer Lane at the north end of the Sioux Empire Fairgrounds. The volunteers explained what life was like years ago when these buildings were occupied. Pioneer Lane consists of four buildings: a log cabin built in 1869, an Episcopal church, the Rutland Train Depot and a school house. About 400 third graders from Sioux Falls schools visited Pioneer Lane.

## **Northern Hills**

by Doris Richter

NHRTA met recently and is considering a merging of its association with AARP on a trial basis. The Spearfish area has been chosen as a "pilot group" in this endeavor. Members of NHRTA are evaluating the benefits for both groups and will vote on this soon. Areas such as Social Security, Medicare and Health Care are some of the priorities for consideration.

Other areas in the state have combined Retired Teachers groups and AARP very successfully. The merger has benefited both groups of retired citizens.

## **Oahe Area**

Oahe Area

by Lyle Kemnitz

The Oahe Area Retired Teachers held their first meeting of the year September 28 at the Pizza Ranch.

The business meeting was held and two new members were welcomed. We also enjoyed the buffet.

We will be hosting the Children's Theater in November, and 50 to 60 local students will be involved.

After the meal, we were treated to a guided tour of the nearly completed new school.

## **Philip Area**

by Marcia West

The Philip Area AARP/RTA met the last Monday of September with our Soup Supper. Rita O'Connell, Chair of the County Commission, was our speaker. Our October meeting will focus on Health Care with an update from a representative from the SDAARP office.

We continue to have good attendance and much interest in Health Care. A contribution of \$400 was given to the Badlands Senior Center to buy a portable PA system which was needed and is being used on a regular basis.



In August, Harriet Wendt and Betty Dodd again coordinated 55 volunteers, working two hour shifts for five days, who answered questions about the four buildings during the Sioux Empire Fair. Total visitors to all four buildings during the fair was around 8,000.

Our monthly meetings are held on the fourth Tuesday of each month at the Royal Fork Buffet Restaurant, 4610 W. Empire Place, located just south of the Empire Mall. Our meetings begin at 11:00a.m. and end at 1:00p.m. In December we meet on the second Tuesday. Visitors are welcome.

For each of our meetings we have a shorter feature presentation in addition to our main speaker. The features during the year will include students from the high schools presenting their oral interpretation selections. We will also have members showcase their talents and have a display of their hobbies. The Center for Active Generations will present "Memory Keepers," a program that gives members ideas of how to record their memories for their families. AARP will also give us updates on their programs.

A Farmers' Market will be held after each meeting this year and the funds collected will be used for a Convention Fund. We want to encourage members to attend the state convention next May in Pierre, and we are hoping to provide a bus or possibly a stipend. Members are asked to donate produce, baked items, and craft items. We are proud to be the Home Chapter of our State President, Al Price.

Almost 90 members attending our first meeting in August heard Sylvia Henken speaking on her book, "My Life." Sylvia shared humorous stories of her family's journey to America and life in Iowa, Minnesota, and South Dakota. She has been an influential part of the Sioux Falls scene for many years. She and her husband owned one of the first radio/tv stations in Sioux Falls. Dee Lundeen was one of our feature speakers and informed us about the AARP Safe Driving Program. Catherine Lacey encouraged members to take classes from OLLI, the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute.

Our September program was presented by Dr. Pam Homan, speaking on "What's Happening in the Sioux Falls Schools?" The feature was a report from Tim Fountain, Boys State, and Stacy Semske,



*Al Price became a temporary member of the theater troupe at St. Boniface Cathedral in Winnipeg*

Girls State, with a thank you for the financial support that they were given. In October we are looking forward to Bill Zubke's "Fudge and Friends" presentation and the oral interpretation students.

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## **Southeast Area**

by Pat Dusseau

The Vermillion Southeast Area Retired Teachers Association met on Wednesday, May 13 at the Vermillion Public Library to honor new retirees. President Pat Dusseau introduced the three local winners of the AARP's grandparent essay contest. The students read their essays. Alikah Sasse, 1st place, Joe Miller, 2nd place, and Sophia Taggart, 3rd place. Alikah won 1st place in the state contest and won a \$500 savings bond. Jolley School received a plaque.

Brenda Martens, Donna Shafer, Pat Dusseau, Pat Michaels, and Edith Siegrist represented the unit at the South Dakota Retired Teachers Association convention held in Pierre on April 27 and 28. Brenda won an award as Outstanding Service, and Edith won an award for Reminiscent Teacher at the 2009 convention.

The recipient of the Vermillion Retired Teachers Unit Scholarship Award was Philip Munkvold.

Retirees from the Vermillion schools and area were Cheryl Lessmann, Virginia Talley, Joyce Zimmer, and Joyce Zimmerman.

Donna and David Fischer of Yankton and Dan Mart were guests, as well as parents and grandparents of the essay winners. Donna is the SDRTA secretary. Dan teaches 5th grade at Jolley and has two of the essay winners as students.

Several meetings were held by the float committee in preparation for the unit's float in the Sesquicentennial parade that was held August 9th in Vermillion. Brenda Marten, Denny Marten, Marlys Stensaas, Mary Ulrich, Marijean Barta, Joe Sippel, and Pat Dusseau picked items of furniture and other items and took the flatbed to Denny's hangar to decorate. *Dressed as a teacher from that period was Nancy Dodgson. Students riding on the float were Allan J. Martens and Arron Martens.*



On September 14th, Mary Ulrich presided over the meeting as the new president and welcomed members back. She introduced Helen Brown, who told us several stories, both humorous and sad, about experiences with kindergarten students she taught over her years of teaching in the Vermillion school system. Members shared some of their own memories of teaching.



The next meeting will be October 14th and the program will be Dr. John Check who will play the concertina and give a history and other facts about concertina. Dr. Check has a doctorate degree in educational psychology and has been active for many years as a composer and player of the concertina and records music weekly and sends to a radio station.

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## Watertown Area

by Harry Johnson

The Watertown Area RTA is off to another great year! Our first meeting for this year was held August 13th at the Elk's Lodge with about 30 members in attendance. Five new members were enrolled.

*Rob Wylie, Exec. Director for SDRS* spoke to our members about the health of our retirement system and possible changes to the system in the next year or so. He reviewed some statistics, provided an overview of the benefit structure of SDRS, and discussed the focus of SDRS in the coming years.



Members participated in the Community Service Day by donating school supplies to counselors in the elementary schools for distribution during the year to students in need. SDRTA bus trips, volunteering, and community involvement keep our members busy and active throughout the year!

Programs for the coming months will feature speakers from local museums, school programs, travel experiences, updates on area activities, and of course, fudge from the best fudge maker in South Dakota.... that would be Bill Zubke!

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## Winner Area

by Rose Marie Rush

Tripp County celebrated their Centennial this year, and everyone was busy getting ready for the celebration in some way or another. The Winner Area Teachers had open house for their schoolhouse at the Museum site. It was a success, with over 100 people visiting the old school house.

In August we hosted a membership breakfast for the 2009 retiring teachers. This was culminated with President Al Price as our guest. We received seven new members at this drive. At the Centennial celebration we enrolled three more members and were very happy to have these local members enrolled by the Sept. meeting.

Our first meeting was held at a new site, the Winner Senior Center, with 26 attending the meeting. Sunny Bruun was the

guest speaker, giving information on the new PTA program. Our next meeting will be Oct. 21 with Chris Brockhoff, Winner High School senior. He was elected FCCLA National President.

The Winner Area Retired Teachers were well represented at the spring convention. We had six members present and two received awards. Don Van Cleave received the Unit Volunteer Award and Rose Rush the Reminiscent Award.

The fall trip to Winnipeg, Canada was GREAT! Art and Betty Sattler, Don and Marian Van Cleave, Marsha Risseuw and Rose Rush had a wonderful cultural experience on the SDRTA trip to Winnipeg's 40th Folklorama. Thanks to Pat and Annette for this wonderful experience.



*Travelers from Winner catching up on local news with the Winner paper in Winnipeg*

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## Yankton Area

by Don Campbell

The Yankton Area Retired Teachers Association continues to be active with many community activities. Several members volunteer at the Avera Sacred Heart hospital, some deliver Meals on Wheels, and many are involved with the Senior Volunteer Program.

Our group meets on the first Thursday of the month. In September our speaker was the state president, Al Price, who told of the many varied opportunities in the SDRTA. He emphasized that this year's theme is historical awareness, and he encouraged everyone to think about our town's heritage.

In October we had Josh Svatos, the General Manager of the Regional Educational Technical School (RTEC) in Yankton speak to us. He told us about the many opportunities for high school students and adults to train for careers. He told us that RTEC partners with other institutions of learning including Black Hills State University, Mount Marty College, and Mitchell Technical Education School.

~ *Some News* ~

A daughter, Avery Greer Wilson, joined the Sam Wilson family in Sioux Falls on Sept. 30. She has a big brother, Colin. –  
~ *Congratulations to Sam and Jennifer* ~

AARP has just announced an opportunity for you to save 20% off any floral orders with Teleflora. For additional information or to place an order, AARP/NRTA members can go to [www.teleflora.com/aarp](http://www.teleflora.com/aarp) or call 800-355-4381. How nice to be able to order same-day delivery of flowers, plants and other gifts with this discount for the upcoming holidays!

~ *Reminders* ~

- When submitting the Reminiscent Teacher Essays, please send them by email in a Word Attachment or on a CD. Thank you ~
- The SDRTA treasury has a fund for membership promotion. Each year \$500 is set aside to be used by units to increase membership. Your unit may apply for \$100 by sending a letter to the treasurer. Tell how the money will be used – a reception, picnic, whatever.
- If you make a donation to SDRTA, you will be recognized in the next issue of the SDRTA Newsletter. You may want to remember the passing of a special teacher or colleague, or perhaps you'd like to honor a member of your family or a past student.

*If you have questions about the newsletter content, please contact Diana Glover. If you have information or questions about member addresses, please contact Cathy Zubke. (See page 3 for contact info'). Thanks.*

***Invite your state board liaison to one of your unit meetings***

Check page 3 for their contact info

- Sioux Falls, Mitchell and Platte - Al Price
- Bennett County and Black Hills - Diana Glover
- Oahe and Aberdeen - Lyle Kemnitz

\*\*\*\*\*  
**Membership is “every-member’s business”. Please pass along this enrollment form to colleagues who are retired or “about-to-be-retired”. Remember all school personnel are invited to join and enjoy the benefits of the South Dakota Retired Teachers Association.**  
\*\*\*\*\*

Yes, I want to join the South Dakota Retired Teachers Association

cut and mail to Art Shaver

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Send this form and \$15 (annual state dues) to:  
Art Shaver  
908 E 61st St.  
Sioux Falls, SD 57108

- Watertown and Brookings – Cathy and Bill Zubke
- Milbank and Redfield - Pat Johnson
- Pierre – Shirley Eisnach
- Yankton and Southeast – Donna Fischer
- Northern Hills – Charollene Coates
- Sioux Falls and Madison – Art Shaver
- Huron – Wyland Borth
- Winner and Pierre – Marrietta Catlin

***Ezpz Fudge (Bill Zubke’s Fudge)***

- 1 ½ sticks butter
- 3 cups sugar
- 7 oz. marshmallow cream
- 2/3 cup evaporated milk
- 1 pkg. flavored chips
- 1 tsp. extract

Melt the butter being sure not to scorch. Add the milk and sugar. Adjust the heat to medium and cook 5 minutes, stirring constantly. Increase heat to medium high and continue stirring until mixture comes to a rolling boil. Boil exactly 1 ½ minutes, stirring continuously. Remove from heat and add chips. Stir until chips are completely melted. Add marshmallow cream and stir until totally blended. Add extract and pour into a buttered 9 x 12 pan. Allow to cool. Keeps in a cool place up to 4 weeks. May be frozen.

***Varieties:***

- Chocolate* – use Nestles, Ghirardelli or Bakers chips and vanilla extract. May add nuts.
- Vanilla* – white chips and vanilla extract
- Almond* – white chips and almond extract
- Cinnamon* – cinnamon chips and no extract
- Peanut Butter* – peanut butter chips and no extract
- Salted Nut Roll* – add large jar of dry roasted peanuts to peanut butter fudge
- Cappucino* – white chips; add 2 T. instant coffee and 2 T. instant cappucino flavoring to milk; top with layer of chocolate fudge.

~ ***Benefits of Membership*** ~  
 Monitoring retirement funds  
 Support from AARP and NRTA  
 Great convention and awards  
 Bus trips and newsletter  
 Social contacts and volunteering  
 Health and legislative info’  
***All for only \$15!***  
 from M. Catlin

## Newsletter

South Dakota Retired Teachers Association  
Cathy Zubke, Membership Chair  
417 Broadway  
Watertown, SD 57201

[www.sdrta.net](http://www.sdrta.net)

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### Check Membership Addresses!

It is important for all unit officers to check with each member for their correct address. Not having correct addresses costs the organization a great deal of money. Send all address changes, as well as names and dates of deaths, to

**Bill and Cathy Zubke, 417 Broadway, Watertown, SD 57201.**  
**Phone: 605-886-8637 • Email address: calz45@hotmail.com**

### Unit Presidents, Addresses, Phone Numbers, Email Addresses

#### Aberdeen Area

**Don Reshetar**  
2318 SE 12th Ave  
Aberdeen, SD 57401  
605-225-4515  
ronjohnson15  
@abe.midco.net

#### Bennett County

**Shirlee Rice**  
29122 231st Ave  
Tuthill, SD 57574  
605-685-6123  
riceas@gwtc.net

#### Black Hills (Rapid City Area)

**Nancy May**  
4619 Bellewood Drive  
Rapid City, SD 57702  
605-718-0666  
nancymay@rushmore.com

#### Cheryl Zimiga

3415 Monarch Ct.  
Rapid City, SD 57702  
605-718-4648  
sczimiga@rushmore.com

#### Brookings

**David C. Peterson**  
2026 Kansas Dr  
Brookings, SD 57006  
605-692-7757  
petersdave@brookings.net

#### Huron Area

**Sharon Fuglsang**  
577 Idaho SE  
Huron, SD 57350  
605-352-4705

#### Kimball Area

**Elsie Petula**  
Box 279  
Kimball, SD 57355  
605-778-6511

#### Lake Region (Britton)

**Lillian Dwight**  
1800 3rd Ave SE  
Aberdeen, SD 57401  
605-493-6494

#### Lemmon

**Hilma Randen**  
Box 132  
Lemmon, SD 57638  
605-374-5437

#### Madison

**Betty Beyer**  
46002 233rd St  
Wentworth, SD 57075  
605-483-3255  
bjb61@itctel.com

#### Milbank Area

**Cliff Vitters**  
515 South 3rd St.  
Milbank, SD 57252  
605-432-4982  
vjmking@wat.midco.net

#### Mitchell Area

**Norma Bietz**  
2202 E 1st St.  
Mitchell, SD 57301  
605-996-5792 &  
605-999-3496  
hnbietz@earthlink.net

#### North Central (Faulkton)

**Evelyn I. Cooper**  
1401 Pearl Street  
Faulkton, SD 57438  
605-598-6563

#### Northern Hills

**Doris Richter**  
19779 Country Lane  
Whitewood, SD 57791  
dgardner53@gmail.com

#### Oahe (Mobridge)

**Lyle Kemnitz**  
1011 1st Ave W  
Mobridge, SD 57601  
605-845-3839  
lkemnitz@westriv.com

#### Philip Area

**Marcia West**  
Box 430  
Philip, SD 57567  
605-859-2213  
cmmwest@gwtc.net

#### Pierre Area

**Jean Easland**  
2301 E. Pine St.  
Pierre, SD 57501  
605-224-4930  
jeasland@pie.midco.net

#### Nancy Baker

408 S. Taylor  
Pierre, SD 57501  
605-224-7017  
nancyjayebaker@yahoo.com

#### Redfield Area

**Mary Tubandt**  
418 East 1st St  
Redfield, SD 57469  
605-472-1488  
metubandt@hotmail.com

#### Mildred Ratigan

25 W. 6th Ave., Apt. 101  
Redfield, SD 57469  
605-472-2209  
mratigan@nvc.net

#### Sioux Falls

**Cathy Anderson**  
925 S 4th Ave  
Sioux Falls, SD 57104  
cander451@msn.com

#### Southeast Area (Vermillion)

**Mary Ulrich**  
922 Crestview Dr  
Vermillion, SD 57069  
rulrich@vyn.midco.net  
pdsuseau  
@vyn.midco.net

#### Watertown

**Harry & Florence Johnson**  
710 2nd Ave. NE  
Watertown, SD 57201  
605-886-9801  
nOxkp@wat.midco.net

#### Winner Area

**Donna Brozik**  
32097 279th St.  
Winner, SD 57580  
605-842-3499  
mdbrozik@gwtc.net

#### Yankton Area

**Don Campbell**  
2315 Walnut St  
Yankton, SD 57078  
605-665-6782  
ddcamp@iw.net