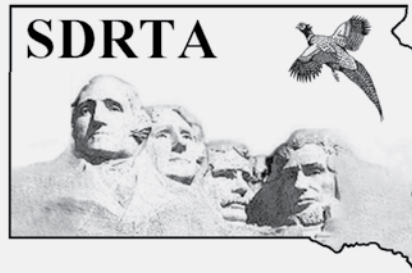


# Newsletter

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 2011, Vol. 42 No. II

## Retirement Update

by Dr. Hank Kosters

Your SDRS board and staff continue to represent your interests in the SDRS at a very high professional level. Following are three board actions that have the potential, long term and short term, to impact SDRS members. These were discussed at the September 7th, 2011 meeting.

1) Staff was directed to prepare legislation for the 2012 Legislative session. The proposed legislation is important as technical corrections and clarifications to current laws are addressed as well as consistency in dealing with beneficiaries.

2) The COLA (cost of living allowance) for retirees will be 3.1%, up from 2.1%, for fiscal year 2012. The SD Retirement System substantially recovered losses as of June 30, 2011.

3) The SDRS Board looked at their long-term goals. The goal of "... replacing approximately 55% of pre-retirement income for a career employee" was reviewed for Class A retirees as that level is now at 50%. As funds become available Class A members' % will be increased. Other areas of the retirement system meet or exceed the goal.

## Getting to Know Annie and Carla

by Diana Glover

**One a kindergarten teacher, the other a math and reading specialist.** Both are winners of the first-ever teacher scholarships given by South Dakota Retired Teachers Association.

**Annie Borns, who has always lived in Brookings (except for college at Vermillion), started her career as a special education teacher in the Deubrook district.** After four years, she transferred to the Brookings district where she continued in special ed. but is now in her fifth year of teaching full-day kindergarten. Annie is working on her Masters in Curriculum and Instruction from South Dakota State University. This pleases her husband, a graduate of SDSU, who quips that she is now an "honorable woman". They have 2 adult sons, one at Fargo and one at SDSU.

**Carla Ramlo graduated from DeSmet High School and Northern State University.** She lives on a farm near White, SD with her husband and 3 young children. At the Deubrook School (White, Toronto and Astoria), she works with 1 or 2 students at a time to deepen their understanding of math and/or reading concepts. She is working on a Masters of Science in Curriculum and Instruction as a Math Specialist through Black Hills State University. She keeps busy with both online and summer classes. She looks forward to completing this journey in June of 2012.

*Continued on page 2*



Annie Borns



Carla Ramlo

*Lobby Day – January 31st*

*Convention – May 1st-2nd*



### ***From Executive Director Shirley Eisnach***

A new section called “Suggestion Box” has been added to the SDRTA website ([www.sdrta.net](http://www.sdrta.net)). On that link you will find “Changing with the Times in SDRTA” that was distributed at the August workshops and also the form that the Watertown RTA treasurer uses for collecting dues. The form can be modified with your local unit name and printed on business envelopes for easy collection of dues and necessary information. We welcome other items for the “Suggestion Box”.

Please send me ([deisnach@pie.midco.net](mailto:deisnach@pie.midco.net)) any ideas you have for special programs, and we will include a section called “Program Ideas” on the website also. We want the website to be a resource for the local unit officers.

Keep checking the website for new information. [www.sdrta.net](http://www.sdrta.net)

### ***WEBSITE QUIZ WINNERS!***

Eight SDRTA members submitted the correct answers to the SDRTA Website Quiz that appeared in the August newsletter. ***Merry Bleeker*** and ***Connie Palmer*** of Pierre and ***Diana Glover*** of Rapid City were the lucky winners of the drawing and an SDRTA annual membership.

Congratulations! Thanks to those who browsed the website for the answers.

These two women, along with 16 other teachers, made application in March of 2011 for the \$750 SDRTA scholarship. The process was strictly an online procedure set up by President Pat Johnson who declared at the outset of her presidency in June of 2010 that she wanted, as her goal for the association, to “give back” in the form of a scholarship to a teacher still in the classroom. Pat challenged retired units from across the state to help with scholarship fundraising. Bill Zubke of Watertown offered the gift of fudge to units who contributed over \$100. And the race was on!

With outstanding response from units and some association-budgeted money, Pat realized that two scholarships could be awarded. The applications were read by members from several units, and the winners, Annie and Carla, were chosen.

To announce the awards, President Pat and Bill and Cathy Zubke went to the recipients’ respective schools and in front of their peers, presented each of them with their scholarships. Carla says, “I was not thinking about the scholarship when I heard our principal announce, ‘South Dakota Retired Teachers’. Instead I thought they had come to welcome a new member as our 3rd grade teacher was retiring. I heard someone speak of the scholarship, and my thoughts shifted to definite surprise. I was very honored to be receiving this scholarship in front of my fellow teachers and students”.

At a staff meeting, Annie learned she had won the scholarship and says, “I was totally dumbfounded and yet, very honored. I cherish it as one of the best moments of my life”. In early May she and her husband were able to attend the state convention of SDRTA in Pierre. She was introduced to members who are proud of her, and yet Annie says, “To be at your banquet was one of the proudest moments in my life. That night I felt like I was amongst family”.

These two women give credence and assurance that the education of South Dakota’s children is in good hands. Carla has students who beg not to miss math. She allows children to explore and to have fun reaching their fullest potential. She shares her personal experiences of transitioning from “town girl” to farmer’s wife, telling about canning garden vegetables and raising cattle, pigs and chickens.

Ever since being a junior in high school, Annie has known she wanted to be a special education teacher. Although she always loved school, she considers herself a “late bloomer”. At age 11, she lost her mother in a fatal car accident, and she thanks teachers who taught her many lessons beyond academia. She believes teaching is more than transference of knowledge, but rather helping our students transform their lives.

Winners of this year’s scholarships will be announced again in the spring. Help pass the word to teachers you know who are working on advanced degrees or national certification. All the information will be on the website, [sdrta.net](http://sdrta.net).

And again, Congratulations, Annie and Carla! We wish you continued success and joy in the classroom.

## SDRTA Elected and Appointed Officers 2010-2012

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

**Past President W. Allen Price**  
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**President-Elect Nancy May**  
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**Vice-President Lyle Kemnitz**  
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lkemnitz@westriv.com

**Secretary Donna Fischer**  
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**Co-Treasurer Gloria and Ron Riherd**  
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605-343-3221  
riherglo@netscape.net

**Co-Membership Bill and Cathy Zubke**  
417 North Broadway  
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Cathy calz45@hotmail.com  
Bill ezbspeak@hotmail.com

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Marrietta Catlin**  
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**Publicity/Newsletter Diana Glover**  
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605-787-4631  
rdglover@rapidnet.com

**Legislation Henry "Hank" Kosters**  
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**Executive Director Shirley Eisnach**  
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# From the President's Desk

## Greetings!



President Pat Johnson

**I hope that your units are off to a great start!** I'm sure that you have interesting programs planned for this year and hopefully have attracted several new members. It is exciting that several of the units are trying new ways to revitalize their meetings.

**Thank You for your attendance at the summer leadership meetings and sharing ideas of what is working for your unit.** How wonderful it was that most units were represented by several of their officers and committee leaders. I am so impressed with your leadership.

**By the time you read this, I'm afraid that the nice fall weather will be over and winter will be here!** Take care of yourself and keep warm. Remember that Spring is just around the corner!. Well maybe a couple of corners!! Speaking of Spring brings thoughts of the Convention. What a great time to get together, see old friends and make new friends.

**This year the convention theme is "The 3 R's — Relax, Rejoice, Rejuvenate".** It is very important that we all take time to relax, take time to rejoice about your and your students successes, and come away from the convention rejuvenated.

**In keeping with the Rejoice portion of our theme, we plan to feature presentations on "Our Students Make an Impact".** Therefore we are asking each unit to select one of their past students that have made an impact on our state or world to feature in a short (3-5 min) presentation during the convention. It will be difficult to select just one student. So start thinking about whom your unit will feature.

**I would appreciate any suggestions you might have as to speakers or entertainers for our convention.** Please email me your ideas. We need your help to make this another great convention!!

**Please check the SDRTA web site ([www.sdrta.net](http://www.sdrta.net)) for details and deadlines for a couple of upcoming events – the Grandparent Essay contest and the Scholarships for current teachers.** Thank you for your support of these projects. I am looking forward to reading your unit news in this newsletter. I am always inspired by the great things the units are doing.

**Keep up the good work and remember to continue having fun at your meetings!!**

**Cordially,  
Your President  
Pat Johnson**

*Enjoy the Holiday Seasons with your family and friends.*

### **Why Join A RTA UNIT and SDRTA? submitted by Marrietta Catlin**

1. You don't buy a newspaper. *You buy the news.*
2. You don't buy eye glasses. *You buy vision.*
3. You don't buy a mattress. *You buy comfort.*
4. You don't buy awnings. *You buy shade.*
5. You don't buy a lamp. *You buy light.*
6. You don't just buy a membership in your local and state organization. *You buy cooperation with other retired teachers to accomplish goals you cannot do alone for there is power in teamwork and numbers.*

# Be Health Smart So You Can Live Smart

There have been many articles and books written about growing old in recent years. Many tell of the challenges for growing old but I like to think of the upsides of growing old.

We all know the importance of taking better care of ourselves including getting routine checkups, getting a flu shot, exercising, making better food choices and just overall living healthier and smarter. Many experts also stress the importance of getting more vitamin D in our daily lives to make each day better and healthier.

I am one who always feels better and more cheerful when it is sunny outside. Perhaps it reminds me of days gone by when I loved hearing my mom sing the song "You Are My Sunshine" on wash day. Or perhaps it is the cheerfulness I feel when I see a big field of bright yellow sunflowers. For on a sunny day, my heart feels overwhelmed with love and happiness. That is why I prefer to think about the upsides of aging no matter what season it is. Each decade I have lived through has been an adventure that I have not experienced and learned from before.

Milton Berle, a comedian, stated it best when he said, "The best way to fight aging is to fight back with humor and laughter." Bob Hope had words of wisdom for aging as well with his saying of "You know you're getting older when the candles cost more than the cake." Mark Twain stated that "Aging is an issue of mind over matter. If you don't mind, it doesn't matter." But my all time favorite quote about aging is one by Madeleine L'Engle. "The great thing about getting older is that you don't lose all the ages you've been before." Concentrate on the upsides of aging and think about the new horizons and adventures before you. They may be better than you ever imagined.

So, think more about the upsides of aging and let more sunshine in your life no matter what season it is. Take good care of yourself, have a good attitude, embrace the opportunities and experiences you have had, take time to be social, take time for laughter and most of all be Health Smart as you Live Smart.



# Life Can Be Like A Warm Quilt

I recently had a friend do a program for my Red Hat group on quilts. She has made several quilts for me throughout the years for various occasions. Each quilt tells a story whether it was the quilt made for my eldest son when he moved to Washington DC, the quilt made for my youngest son when he got married, the memory quilt made for my retirement from teaching featuring the handprints of the students or the quilt she

made for my husband's retirement. All are special and unique as well as cozy and comforting to those who received the quilts. They remind me of a saying on a plaque I received from a friend years ago, "*Quilts are like friends, a source of comfort.*"

Quilts remind me of our giving back to our communities with our community service. In our giving of our time and talents, we are helping others and giving them a source of comfort as they realize others do care about them. Whether it is in helping our youth or helping adults, we are making life better for others by being that warm quilt. It is that love and caring that binds us together one quilt square at a time.

This summer I had the chance to really see persons in my area being that warm quilt for others as they helped family, friends and neighbors in our community with the flooding issues. Hours upon hours were given freely to helping others whether they needed help moving personal property, sandbagging or whatever. That reaching out to others reminds me of another quilt saying that states "*When life gives you scraps---stitch quilts.*" All those helping hands with the flooding issues definitely made life better for those affected by the flood. Neighbors and friends were given scraps but volunteers helped with the stitching and made life warmer for those needing help.

When we volunteer in our communities, remember that our lives are much like a patchwork quilt. We are pieced together bit by bit with good times and bad times but we are stitched together with love and compassion. Our lives become richer as we reach out to help others and in turn we are making our lives a little richer, too.

Keep adding to your life's quilt by sharing your time and talents with others. Not only are we helping other adults and our youth in a positive way in our communities but we are setting a wonderful example not only for our youth but our country as well. Keep recording your volunteer hours and give them to your local community service chair by April 1, 2012. I look forward to totaling all unit community service hours for a report at our state convention in May. Your acts of kindness are truly appreciated. As we reach out to others may we remember that *life is like a patchwork quilt pieced together stitch by stitch as we live simply, care deeply, speak kindly and love generously.*

*Our theme this past year was  
"Cultural Harmony"*

*Can you answer which nationality each  
of the following people were?*

*Check your answers on page 11.*

1. Korczak Ziolkowski, sculptor
2. Roberto Clemente', baseball player
3. Jimmy Durante', comedian entertainer
4. Leo Tolstoy, writer
5. Emily Dickinson, poet
6. Milton Hershey, candy company founder
7. John Kennedy, US president
8. Jacqueline Bouvier Onassis, first lady, USA
9. Pearl S Buck, writer
10. Paul Robeson, athlete, singer
11. Stephen Foster, composer
12. Knute Rockne, football coach
13. Eero Saarinen, architect
14. Cesar Chavez, political organizer
15. Ben Reifel, SD Congressman
16. Antonin Dvorak, composer

*Thanks to Bonita Ley of Rapid City for the  
information for this quiz.*

### ***Grandparent of the Year Essay Contest***

Thanks to all units that have participated in the 5th grade essay contest in past years. Again this year the topic is "Why My Grandparent Should Be the AARP SD Grandparent of the Year". Fifth graders in both public and private schools are invited to participate.

All guidelines are on the association website, sdrta.net, or you may contact Marilyn Kratz, the chair of this project. Your unit winner's essay must be submitted to her by February 15, 2012 for regional and state judging. The state winner will be awarded a \$500 savings bond and plaque at the state convention in Pierre on May 2.

Marilyn Kratz – 2007 Ross Street, Yankton, SD 57078  
605-664-5864 • mkratz@iw.net

## *Amendments to SDRTA Bylaws*

Presented by the SDRTA Board  
To be voted upon at SDRTA  
Annual Meeting on May 2, 2012

### **ARTICLE IV. DUTIES OF OFFICERS**

#### Section 5. Treasurer

b. Change the word "records" to "retains". It will now read as follows:

b. Records the source and amount of all moneys received and retains the names and addresses of all active members as their dues are received and expeditiously transmits a copy of the names and addresses to the Membership Chair.

### **ARTICLE VIII. DUTIES OF STANDING COMMITTEES**

#### Section 2. Membership

Strike all of subsection b. ~~May keep a card file or computer record of members, both active and deceased.~~

Replace with new subsection b as follows:

b. Shall keep a card file or computer record of all members.

## *Donations Are Appreciated Thanks to:*

### **Yankton Area Retired Teachers**

### **Pierre Area Retired Teachers**

In Memory of:

Bernice Benson • Jack Burchill  
Thelma Travis • Shirley Donahue

### **Shirley Eisnach**

To the SDRTA Scholarship Fund  
In Memory of Thelma Travis

### **Marrietta Catlin**

In Honor of Charollene Coates  
My sister, good friend, mentor and  
Past President of SDRTA

### **Ron and Marrietta Catlin**

In Honor of Annette Belkonen and Pat  
Johnson for the fantastic  
SDRTA Bus Trips we have had the  
opportunity to be part of.

# Unit News From Across The State

## Aberdeen Area

by Evelyn Blum

Wednesday October 12 the Aberdeen members were treated to an afternoon of Fun and Fudge with Bill Zubke from Watertown. His wife Cathy accompanied Bill and also shared with the group her enthusiasm for membership in the Retired Teachers Association. The group met at the Dacotah Prairie Museum.

Our members met Wednesday, Nov. 16 at the new Simmons Middle School for lunch with the students after which we were guided on a tour of the school and of the new addition of the neighboring Simmons Elementary.

The December meeting will be at the traditional time and place, noon meal at Northern State University. Other meeting programs will include a presentation by the Chinese International students in February and a tour of the Community Theater in April.

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## Black Hills

by Emilie Zacher

The last report from the Black Hills unit reported 2 high teas being held. The funds gave some partial funding to those going to the state convention. We had many members attending and received the traveling trophy. We enjoyed many nice presentations from the speakers, excellent food, and great conversations with people across the state.

Our Rapid City May banquet honored our deceased members. Many of our members volunteered at the Keystone Living History School. Summer projects continued as we took a field trip to one of our member's ranch. Geri Evans gave us a tour of her rock gardens and flowers.

Our Create the Good project continued throughout the summer as we presented funds to Storybook Island and clothing and paper products to Women against Violence. We participated with AARP in the Aging Healthy Fair. Money was given to the Airmen and Family Readiness Program at Ellsworth Air Force Base. A School of Mines student from Afghanistan received financial help. Support was given to a high school program which is preventing drop-outs. Habitat for Humanity received a check. Western Resources, a program for people of all ages with disabilities, received help so they can lead independent lives. A presentation of funds to the Meals on Wheels program provided funds.

Another fall project was at the Cornerstone Mission for Women and Children. Our August picnic was a time for donations of fall harvest produce, clothing for children, and nonperishable food. A follow up activity took place when some of our members did crafts with the children of the Mission. Magazines continued to be donated to many Black Hills facilities.

September, October, and November brought excellent programs as we celebrated Veteran's Day with a speaker who had revisited Viet Nam. Rapid City has 2 new facilities - Main Street Square and the new Game and Fish Outdoor Learning Campus. We heard presentations on both of them.



*Megan Karbowski, Main Street Square Director, and Program Chair Dixie Serr*

Upcoming events will be a brunch at the Arrowhead Country Club, ringing bells for the Salvation Army, and continuing donations to the United Way.

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## Brookings Area

by Verl Hieb

The Brookings unit was challenged by retired history professor John Miller at the October meeting to start thinking about composing essays on the topic "What Makes a South Dakotan?" The essays which are being solicited state wide by the South Dakota Humanities Council will be evaluated by the council and included in a book to be published at a later date. The essays are part of an on-going endeavor entitled "Project on Civic Reflection" which has resulted in several books being published relating to South Dakota history and culture in recent years.

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## Huron Area

by Sue Gose

Our September meeting had our Vice President Donna Uttenhove sharing about organ transplants and passing out forms to donate organs. We brought school supplies.

In October Superintendent Terry Nebelsick shared his vision and plans for the district. We played a grab bag game to make money for scholarships.

November we had two speakers sharing ideas for gifts. We decided to stop doing the monthly birthday parties at the nursing home, because of changes at the home. Donations were made for teacher scholarships. Next we will bring paper products for the Salvation Army.

*Happy Holidays*

# Unit News From Across The State

## Madison

Jake Droge spoke to the Madison Retired Teachers about reverse mortgages. There was a great attendance at the meeting, and everyone felt they learned a lot.

Member Joyce Welbon and her husband Claire were the grand marshals at the Dakota State University homecoming parade. Fellow-members are very proud of Joyce!

At each meeting there will be a cash collection called "Dollars for Scholars". The money raised will be given to the state scholarship fund.

Rita Brown and Betty Beyer assembled a basket of jewelry, lotions and other items for an auction at the Madison Educational Foundation dinner in November.



*Ruth Spencer, Betty Beyer, Ann Lea Niedert, and Bonnie Nelson went on the "Hunting for Hidden Treasures" bus trip to Wisconsin and Minnesota. Following the trip they had their picture and an article in the Madison paper.*

Many people have commented to them about the article and have shown interest in future SDRTA bus trips.

## Milbank Area

by Cliff Vitters

**SEPTEMBER 9** • House Party in connection with AARP Day of Service –Our members brought in food items-donated to local food pantry.

**SEPTEMBER 15** • Boy State Adam Cloos & Girl State Kelsey Bergquist

**OCTOBER 20** • 13 members visited the Orphan Grain Train Building/packed food for the program –Kids Against Hunger. 1572 meals were packed. Over \$200 in donations by members were given to the project. RTA brought in 25 pounds of food-given to local pantry.



*Packing food for the Kids Against Hunger program*

**NOVEMBER 9 – 10** • Two members will be attending Volunteer Event in Sioux Falls

**NOVEMBER 17** • In keeping with AARP themes for this month-Military Family/Care giving-invited Mr. Jason Kettwig who served in Afghanistan.

### FUTURE PLANS:

**DECEMBER 15** Christmas Party

**JANUARY 2012** Looking forward to Lobby Days

**JANUARY 19** Emergency Management – Sheryl Mogard

**FEBRUARY 16** Grant Co. Sheriff – Mr. Kevin Owen

**MARCH 15** Bill & Cathy Zubke – Surprise Topic

**APRIL 19** Stengel Grain & Seed – Tim/Sue Stengel

**MAY 17** Natalie Gauer – Hospital Administrator

## Mitchell Area

by Norma Bietz

On November 17th the Mitchell group had a social at the Mitchell Technical Institute.

The following story is about Ruth Schimming who was pianist for the association for many years:

*Ruth Margaret Ingalls Schimming* was born Nov. 19, 1910 at Geddes, SD in the home of her maternal grandparents. From 1917 – 1930 her family moved to several destinations in Iowa, and in 1931 they moved to Ft. Pierre, SD. At age 6,



she could sing and play several pieces on the piano. She played for recitals, church services and club events in the towns where she had lived. At 19, in 1929, she attended Des Moines, Iowa's "School of Fine Arts".

For the past 50 years, Ruth has lived in Mitchell where she received her teaching degree at Dakota Wesleyan University while teaching music in the Mitchell School system. For 50 years, she spent a lot of time at Zion Lutheran Church, giving generously of her talents, time and professionalism. She directed 5 choirs, taught bell choir and assisted with special services, as well as giving piano lessons.

Her daughters, Marilyn Dorr of California and Maurine Bietz, Gillette, WY, followed in her footsteps, playing piano and organ in their respective churches. Her son Lee Schimming (deceased) was also involved with music in the Tracy, MN school system and his church.

In November of 2010, Ruth's 100 years of life was celebrated by her family and friends. The barber shop chorus (whom she directed for several years) sang to this gracious lady. Her family acknowledged, "It was the grace of God that enabled her to use her talents, and we give thanks".

Two months before her 100th birthday, she moved from her home to Prairie Crossings Assisted Living. Now it's time to say "Happy 101st Birthday, Ruth".

# Unit News From Across The State

## Northern Hills

by Josephine Boyer

Thirty members and guests attended the Northern Hills Retired Teachers Association (NHRTA) meeting on 19 September 2011 for a potluck luncheon at the Spearfish Senior Center. Ken Halsey, a retired university administrator, presented a program entitled, "Proposed Congressional Transparency Bills for Public Pension Plans". These Senate and House bills, if enacted, would create a federal oversight bureaucracy that would negatively impact the South Dakota Retirement System. Mr. Halsey concluded by saying, "There is no need for the federal government to take actions that could result in undesirable changes in state and local pension plans".

Rosalie Aslesen, a guest at the meeting, presented a petition, as a ballot measure, to enact an additional one percent sales tax to help fund K-12 public education and Medicaid in South Dakota, and asked the members present for their support.

At the October 17 meeting, *Josephine Hartmann, an education consultant*, spoke on the "Common Core State Standards in Education" (CCSS). She said, "Test scores and text books have not been standard in education. What the CCSS is trying to do is standardize the tests and scores". Her talk also made the point that CCSS were designed to provide a clear set of shared goals and expectations for what knowledge and skills will help students succeed and to ensure quality and consistency across our education system. By 2015, a set of comprehensive and innovative assessment in English-Language Arts and Math will be assessed so that all students leave high school prepared for postsecondary success in college or a carrier through increased student learning and improved teaching.



The November meeting was on November 21 at the Spearfish Senior Citizen Center.

## Pierre Area

by Shirley Eisnach

PARTA officers were thinking "outside the box" as they planned the programs for the upcoming year. Even though bylaws were changed to allow for meeting day flexibility, the executive board decided to continue gathering on the fourth Tuesday. Times of day and venues have changed, however, and the year began with record attendance at a 4:00 hors d'oeuvres and wine event at Log Heaven Resort on Lake Oahe.

Other plans are for 10:00 rolls and coffee at the Cultural Heritage Center, a 9:00 breakfast at Perkins, a noon salad luncheon and board games at the SDHSAA, a 4:00 tour of the Bickering Brothers Distillery, an evening meal in Highmore, and two traditional noon

lunches. PARTA is delighted to have 18 new members already this fall.

Major volunteer activities for members have been filling Senior Boxes at Feeding South Dakota Food Bank and backpacks for school children, as well as sorting items collected in the Boy Scout Food Drive for the Pierre Pantry. Volunteer coordinator Jean Easland keeps members informed of many volunteer opportunities in the community.

Officers are Co-presidents Mary Jo Johnson and Connie Palmer, Secretary Lois Russell, and Treasurer Barb Sogaard.



Co-President Mary Jo Johnson & Treasurer Barb Sogaard



"Maxine" aka Sheila Clark-Urban says, "Keep smiling!"

## Redfield Area

by Verna Ellenson

In conjunction with the AARP food drive, the Redfield Area Retired Teachers Association collected food and made cash donations to the local Tri-County Good Samaritan Center.

*Pictured are RARTA co-presidents Jerald Bender and Arlie Rodman and Good Samaritan Directors Penny Ihnen and Sheri Wurtz.*



RARTA members Mildred Ratigan and Viola Hardie recently took part in the fall SDRTA bus trip to western Wisconsin and the Twin Cities. At our

local November meeting, they shared with the rest of our group the places they saw and the fun they had on this journey.

## Sioux Falls Area

by Cathy Anderson

In May 2011, 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

# Unit News From Across The State

a schoolhouse. About 300 third graders from Sioux Falls schools visited Pioneer Lane.

In August Harriet Wendt and Betty Dodd again coordinated 50 volunteers, working two hour shifts for five days, who answered questions about the four buildings during the Sioux Empire Fair. Total visitors to Pioneer Lane was around 6,000.

Our monthly meetings are held on the fourth Tuesday of most months at the Royal Fork Buffet Restaurant, 4610 W. Empire Place, located just south of the Empire Mall. Our meetings begin at 11:00 a.m. and end at 1:00 p.m. During the two holiday months, we have changed our meeting date. In November we will meet the third Tuesday, and in December we will meet the second Tuesday. Visitors are welcome.

Over 90 members attending our first meeting in August heard from Diane Diekman, a SD author of "A Farm in the Hidewood: My South Dakota Home." She shared her life stories growing up and the road to being an author.

At our September meeting Sioux Falls Mayor Mike Huether presented a program on the proposed event center project that will face voters in November. He had a slide presentation and then answered questions from the group.

Hagar, the Horrible, a.k.a., Chris Browne and Ken Alvine entertained us at our October meeting on "The World of Cartooning." It was so interesting to hear about the ins and outs of developing cartoons and how they come up with their ideas. Chris shared with us how the characters in Hagar are based on his family. It was a very fun, interesting, and informative program.

In November, Greg Boris and Susan Randall presented a program on their organization, SD Voices for Children. They are an organization involved in all aspects of being an advocate for the children of South Dakota.

We are also looking forward at our December meeting to just enjoy the holiday season with a spirited sing-a-long with members. We will also have music from one of the Sioux Falls School musical groups to entertain us.

In January, SF Superintendent, Pam Homan, will give us an update on the Sioux Falls School System and all that is going on. As former educators we love to keep up on all the new innovations and programs in education.

Coming up in February, Officer John Lohr, from the SF Police Department will be here with his police dog to tell us about the Canine Police squad and how they are keeping Sioux Falls safe.

Sioux Falls is a targeted committee for the AARP "Create the Good" project and so we have been working with the local chapter of AARP to spend



*Cathy Anderson, Tanya from The Banquet & Bob Stevens working on the S.O.S Project*

\$4000 in Sioux Falls where we think that it is needed the most.

We have helped The Banquet with several of their projects such as the Supply One Student, a project for giving school supplies, shopping opportunities and food to needy children.

We honored veterans with a donation to the VFW for their Avenue of Flag project, helped with Handi-Riders, a rehabilitation center using horses for therapy, Meals-On-Wheels, Parent Connection, Grandparents' Day, Lunch is Served, providing lunch for adult workers, and more projects to come.

Through the Create the Good campaign, SF Retired Teachers have provided financial support to many organizations. Our members have been very supportive of all of our projects this year, by helping out in person and with donations of goods.

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## Vermillion Area (S.E.)

by Mary Ulrich

Our unit started the new year in September welcoming a few new members and renewing old friendships. Member Brenda Martens told about Retired Teachers bus trips she has taken, and Betsy Simons, another member, related her humorous teaching experiences, one involving a mechanical bull and some broken bones.

In October, Dee Lundeen, a representative from AARP, shared information about the driving class that AARP offers. Dick Sunde, a local State Farm Insurance agent, provided some defensive driving tips.

Our November meeting honored Veterans Day. Pastor Sandy Aakre, the Baptist minister in Vermillion, who has served numerous tours of duty in Iraq, shared his experiences and considerable knowledge of the area.

We hope all have a joyful holiday season, and our meetings will resume in February.

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## Watertown Area

by Bill Zubke

Leverage: to use a quality or advantage to obtain a desired effect or result

Start with the love of horseback riding. Joy Nelson had a passion. She leveraged that enthusiasm into Joy Ranch—Lutheran Outdoors newest venture. Built on a beautiful lakeside frontage, this western town (complete with its own church and school) was originally planned to provide outdoor activities for physically and/or mentally challenged youngsters. But by design, it has become so much more. It now houses dormitories, hotel rooms, banquet facilities and meeting rooms, and is open to any and all who desire such an experience, obtaining a result far greater than anticipated or expected.

Add the Watertown Area Retired Teachers Association—in need of a program. Leverage that need into a road trip to tour Joy Ranch. Make it authentic, however. Every member should wear a bandana to "fit in" with the surroundings. Covered wagon rides, strolls along

Watertown Cont...

the lake, and a trip to the “saloon” made the morning extraordinary.

*Bandanas. Leverage. Why not take the bandanas, piece them together, have them professionally quilted and bound, and create a one-of-a-kind quilt?*



But we’re not done. Take that quilt and auction it off at the annual Festival of Trees sponsored by Lake Area Technical Institute. Dedicate the money raised to scholarships for young adults soon to be in a position to care for our needs. How they will leverage those skills is truly limitless.

And all because one woman loved to ride horses!

Leverage—a pretty darn good concept!

## Winner Area

by Jo Haffield, President

On September 28, we kicked off our new year with a brunch hosted by the officers of the Winner Unit. Marrietta Catlin was our special guest speaker and inspired all those in attendance to think “outside the box” when it comes to serving our communities through volunteer work. In October one of our new members, Trena Vandembark, spoke on “Teaching in Thailand”.



Marrietta Catlin & Jo Haffield

We have been busy trying to finish projects that we had begun on the Dorian School. This is the rural school for which our unit has taken responsibility. This fall we have had installed six new storm windows and the new front door that we had previously purchased. The handicap-accessible front step will hopefully be finished this winter. It is being built from steel by a local welding shop. The money to do this came from member donations and a community grant.

When this project is complete, we are planning to paint the interior and seal the wooden floors of the school.

When we sign the attendance roster at each meeting, we have the opportunity to register and donate toward the door prize. This year, our door prize donations will go toward the scholarship fund.

Two people from our unit went on the “Heritage Tour” bus trip with Pat and Annette. It was an outstanding and wonderfully organized trip as usual! There is nothing more fun than going on a trip with a group of retired teachers!

Jo Haffield & Bill Zubke dancing the schottische at Norskadalin, WI



## Recent Bus Trips Summary of the August Bus Trip to Winnipeg

by Karen Gross

If you want a million dollar tour on a hundred dollar budget then travel with Pat Johnson and Annette Belkonen on a SDRTA-sponsored trip. You will get the best bang for your buck! Even though it was their fifth bus tour to Winnipeg for Folklorama, the two of them found unique and interesting ways to entertain their traveling guests. We visited the International Peace Garden on the border between the United States and Canada. It is truly a tribute to serenity and peace. It is the longest unfortified border in the world and the flora is beyond beautiful.

Folklorama’s different sounds, sights, and tastes fill its audience with a sense of awe. The songs, dances, crafts, and food helped us to celebrate the uniqueness of various cultures. The outstanding local guides enhanced our enjoyment of the hospitality of “Friendly Manitoba”.

### *A Few Lines from Bill Zubke’s Doggeral about October Trip to WI and MN*

October two--where Sioux does fall  
We gather one--we gather all  
To ride--to talk--no subject deep  
Our purpose known--at leaves to peep.

Annette and Pat--oh how they’ve planned  
The stops, the food upon demand.  
Red and orange – yellow and green  
Prettiest trees I’ve ever seen.

Bus to Eagan follows river  
Colors brightly send a shiver  
Casper’s dinner--dessert just right  
Full but happy we bid good night.

Theatre next--lunch then the show  
Opal is great--Rosie? No show.  
Back to the bus--trees--we see ‘em  
And much more at Arboretum.

Already Friday? My, time does fly  
Bus trip soon done--must say goodbye  
Some at the start indeed we knew  
New friends we’ve made--and not a few.





## Photos From October Trip

Ruby and Hank Kosters enjoyed learning about Wisconsin round barns from Guide Kevin



Bus driver Jeff Olson at The National Eagle Center



Jo Haffield, Marrietta Catlin and Bill Zubke joined the St. Paul riverboat musicians onstage

## Notes from:

**President-Elect Nancy May** – I am awaiting your reminiscent teaching story. If you haven't yet written about being an educator, you have a good story to tell. Send your story via email to [nancymay@rushmore.com](mailto:nancymay@rushmore.com) by April 1, 2012. It will be displayed at the spring convention, May 1 – 2.

**Membership Bill Zubke** - Thank you for the updated information on members we couldn't find and for continuing to keep us informed. And always remember—you ARE the organization, and you can help us grow! Encourage a friend to join by sending \$15 to Ron/Gloria Riherd, 3945 Corral Dr, Rapid City, SD 57702.

### Heritage Quiz (pg. 5) Answers:

- |                 |                     |
|-----------------|---------------------|
| 1. Polish       | 9. Dutch            |
| 2. Puerto Rican | 10. African         |
| 3. Italian      | 11. Scotch          |
| 4. Russian      | 12. Norwegian       |
| 5. English      | 13. Finnish         |
| 6. German       | 14. Mexican         |
| 7. Irish        | 15. Native American |
| 8. French       | 16. Czechoslovakian |



## Protecting Seniors, Celebrating Volunteers!

by Cathy McLeer, [cmcleer@aarp.org](mailto:cmcleer@aarp.org)

A huge “THANK YOU” to the many AARP and Retired Teacher volunteers who’ve participated in our Protect Seniors Campaign. Over the last few months, hundreds of you have signed petitions, made phone calls and shared compelling, personal stories on the need to protect the Medicare and Social Security benefits you’ve earned. Your efforts do make a difference!

One of the highlights of this campaign took place during the recent AARP South Dakota Volunteer Celebration and Training. More than 40 volunteers boarded a bus and made stops at each of the Congressional district offices in Sioux Falls carrying a message to stop cuts to Social Security and Medicare as part of the Super Committee’s work to trim the national debt. As the Super Committee continues their work, AARP South Dakota will keep fighting to protect the benefits South Dakotans are counting on in their retirement. You can join the effort, or just check out our photos and other activities by visiting our web page at [www.aarp.org/sd](http://www.aarp.org/sd) or on Facebook – [www.facebook.com/aarpsouthdakota](http://www.facebook.com/aarpsouthdakota)

It wasn’t all work and no play! We did take time to celebrate the tremendous work our volunteers have been doing in all corners of South Dakota. The collaborative efforts between AARP and Retired Teacher volunteers are having such a positive impact in communities all across South Dakota. From supporting AARP’s Drive to End Hunger, contributing to local groups making a difference in the lives of women and children, and improving communities through various service projects, volunteers are leaving their mark in truly inspirational ways.

We also honored the 2011 AARP South Dakota Andrus Award recipient. Shirley Reilly of Sioux Falls was recognized for her many contributions to AARP and her community. Shirley works not one, but two jobs, and still finds time and energy to give back in meaningful ways.

Finally, as one year winds down, AARP already has their sights set on 2012! Grab your calendar and “save the date” for AARP South Dakota Lobby Day at the state capitol, Tuesday, January 31st! Watch for details and information on how to participate at the end of December/early January. Hope to see you there!

**AARP South Dakota, 1-866-542-8172 Toll Free  
5101 S. Nevada Ave. | Suite 150 | Sioux Falls, SD 57108**



Cathy Anderson, Leni Healy, Sarah Jennings and Diana Glover attended the “Community Presence” workshop in Chicago Nov. 1-3

## Newsletter

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

**Phone: 605-886-8637 • Email address: calz45@hotmail.com**

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