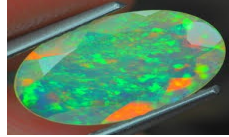




GEMS



The Official Publication of Retired Educators Association of Idaho

Volume 29 Number 1- 15 March 2023

President's Message

Hello to all members and Those Who Will Soon Be,

The three things that people getting older lose are 1. Memory and the other two. "I can't remember!" "And so it goes as we traverse the intrepid challenges of age likening to scaling the North face of Mt. Everest at a 70% incline or the Hillary Step before the 2015 earthquake.

There will always be obstacles. The AARP magazine is a continued source of information that can guide us forward one step at a time.

One is the loss of friends and relatives who were there to give one support and one could give back that same support..... don't allow loneliness to void your senses...so far you have climbed to Everest base camp @ 5200 meters.

Two is the sense of belonging. It is a deep human need, linking us to other people and places we inhabit. Yet, we also prize our independence; our ability to move freely and not be tied to one place throughout our lives. Choose to visit the top of the Mountains.

Three Chronic Health Conditions. 65% of older people do not exercise and can cause their health to decline. The cost of

health and the cost of assisted living loom ahead like the clouds covering the world's tallest mountain.

Ok, enough of the gloom and doom mountaineers. There is a monumental modification of significant changes coming forth. Our two year State Convention (haven't had one for the past four years) that will be hosted by the South Eastern Region at the Fort hall Indian Casino and Hotel on April 20-21st. Applications have been sent out to all units and a detailed agenda will be sent out as soon as it is completed.

The election of new officers, Necrology and Hall of Fame persons will be presented and along with business meetings of each region. Delegates from each unit will decide the elections and your current President will be de-elected. I will give a message of farewell and wish only the best for those State Officers who will rope up with crampons affixed to climb ahead with this Idaho's Association of Retired Educators even if it's only Mt. Borah @3859 meters.

Yours Truly,
REA of I President,
Mr. Stan Cope

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**Travel Adventures
2023 Trips with Collette**

PERSI

No report at this time.

Spotlight on South Dakota. September 15-21, 2023
Highlights: Crazy Horse Memorial, Mt. Rushmore, Badlands National Park, Wall Drug, Devils Tower, Jeep Safari at Custer Park. Price includes air fare from Boise, 9 meals and lodging.

Double \$2849.00 Single \$3499.00 Triple \$2819.00

Optional insurance waiver \$349.00. To receive \$150.00 off, book by March 8, 2023. Deposit is \$698.00. Final payment due July 17, 2023.

American Heritage to Philadelphia through Washington D.C. has two trips scheduled for 2023. It will then be discounted after that. Want a trip that's not listed: contact Lucas Bialecki (Collette Rep.) at

ibialecki@collette.com. Be sure to mention my name and that you are a member of Retired Educators of Idaho. For questions and further information contact Margaret Reimer at 208-887-6747 or 208-350-9808

Submitted by

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RENCI

Hello from Central Idaho which is cold one day and warm the next. Right now there are a few snow flurries falling outside my window. I can look down on my flower beds and see small crocuses peeking out to determine if it is safe to come out in full.

Our unit has had several great presentations the last few months we have met. In December we combined spaces with Lewiston/Clarkston Chamber of Commerce Lewiston Rotary Club at the Hells Canyon Grand Hotel so we can all enjoy the Golden Voices choir from the Lewiston High School sing Christmas songs. What a fantastic way to get our organizations message out that we are not only retired but involved in the community.

In January we had a book talk by our own Marilyn Feeney. She is an avid reader and keeps track of all the interesting and fun books she reads throughout the year and shares her list with us each January. We all look forward to each year and take one home with us so we can read the books also.

For our February program, we had Steve Branting give us a history of education in the Lewiston schools since 1860. His presentation, Readin', Writin', and school marms, was well received and gave us a lot to talk about. It also brought memories to many of the members about the schools in which they may have worked.

Looking forward to more creative presentations the rest of the year and the state convention in April and watching my flowers come to life for the year.

Submitted by Pat Hoch

BKM

BKM has been very active in the local communities. Besides members who volunteer in the schools and for various organizations, members contribute at our monthly meetings money, food and other necessities to two local organizations Idaho Food Bank and Giraffe Laugh, a preschool program for disadvantaged youth. Several travelers have financed our Grant programs to provide grants to active teachers. The money is a commission which comes from their travel with Collette. BKM decided that we would be able to award at least 3 \$500 grants this year. Our scholar-

ship fund for BSU Education majors in their senior year is also growing each month.

We had a guest speaker on Fraud Watch from AARP in February and a history lesson and tour of Bishop's House in January. We are looking forward to learning about our refugees who take classes and make items for sale with Artisans for Hope, learning more about STEM from one of our very knowledgeable members, and our final meeting of the year for Necrology (so far none this year) and election of officers.

Submitted by

Larry Lee, BKM President

Lower Snake

The Lower Snake River Retired Educators enjoyed a rambunctious day of playing. Bunco for our most recent meeting date of February 15, 2023 at the Payette United Methodist Church. We had a great turnout and lots of fun. The big winners of the day were: Carolyn Kniefel, Ron Warzyn, Connie Stein and Peggi Hash.

Our own Anne Ernst won the prize for the least number of games won. Everyone one brought a snack to share because we never go hungry at LSRRE meetings!

Submitted by

Cris Warzyn,
Secretary Lower Snake

Community Service

Community Service has taken on some special meanings for me this past week. Several of you have already turned in your forms for hours and financial contributions. You have great pride and place value on that service. In addition to long church hours, since a week ago today I have spent long community service hours. Wednesday (10,) Thursday (12), Friday (14), Saturday (10), Sunday (6), Monday (10) and Tuesday (9). Today I left the house at 8 AM and returned at 3PM—community service, and tonight 9-12:30 tonight. It is not about me with 71 hours from Wed-Tue at \$29.95 and hour or \$2,126.45 of service credit. I know I am an odd-duck by nature. However, it is about the senior citizens on the boards I serve who joined me—Meals on Wheels-14; Business Improvement-2; museum-12; Library Foundation-10. These are senior citizens serving Idaho on just four of my many boards. Can you bet that retired teachers are represented? Of course. And, they are the movers and shakers, the leaders.

Part of us reacts like teachers and educational employees: we just want to make our communities better. Some of us measure our self-worth by what we do for the community. Some of us do this to escape from the house or to keep from being ejected by our retired

spouses who need a break from us. Some of us know we are old, but truly understand that we have the capacity to be “the living part of the dying formula.” We are alive and want to flaunt the fact that calendar years, wrinkles (or crevices as my grandson said to me), and the slowing of our strides has not totally impaired our ability to work, to think, to encourage, to participate, and to lead. Community Service for me personally is the only badge I can truly wear to the grave other than the normal obituary lines: He was a good man, loving father, grandfather, great grandfather, son, and brother. There is so much more that should be a legacy. Maybe I should care about that. I do, but I won't be around to enjoy accolades for life.

I, like most of you, truly do community service to make my circumstance better. My favorite Spanish Golden Age Philosopher/author Ortega y Gasset wrote what I want on my tombstone because for me it fits both life and death—I added the last five words: “I am I and my circumstances—and my circumstance is good.” Even what I do for RENCI and REA is me making my circumstances better. Bet is the same for each of you... Serve on with pride.

Submitted by Dennis Ohrtman
State Chair Community Service
Dr. Dennis W. Ohrtman

180 Dayz

www.180dayz.com

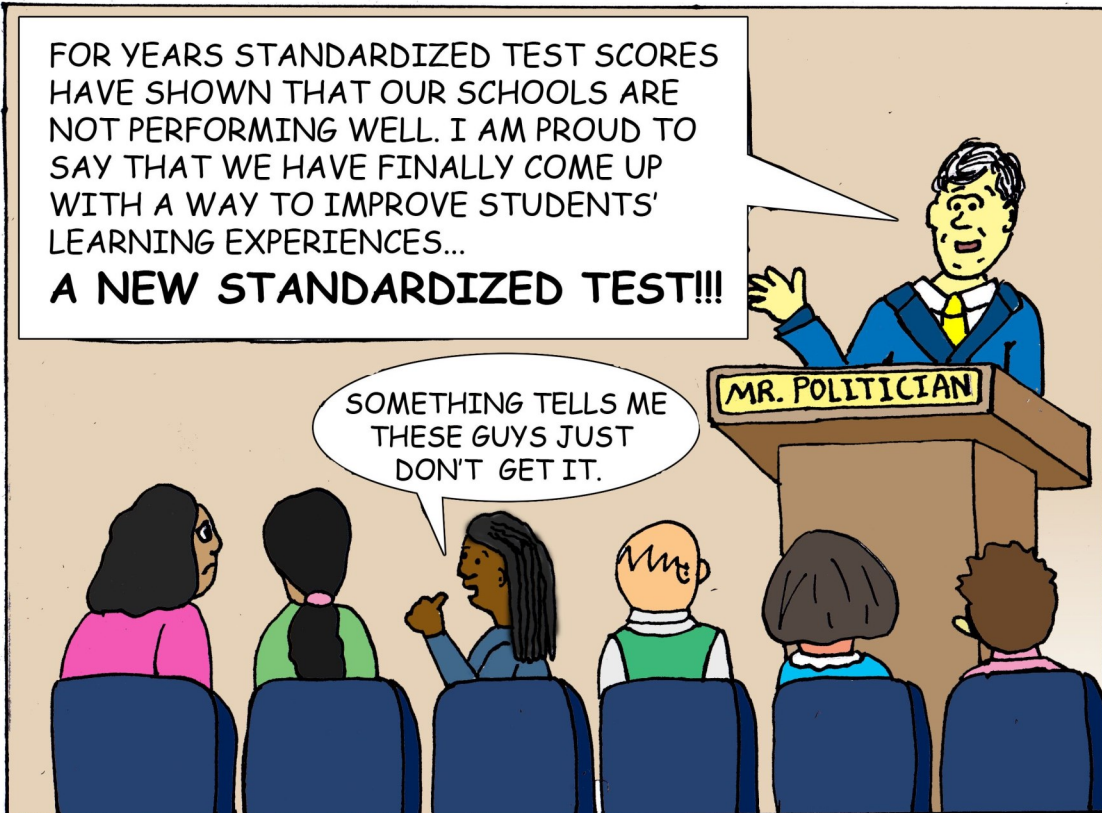
By Scott Hubeny

FOR YEARS STANDARDIZED TEST SCORES HAVE SHOWN THAT OUR SCHOOLS ARE NOT PERFORMING WELL. I AM PROUD TO SAY THAT WE HAVE FINALLY COME UP WITH A WAY TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' LEARNING EXPERIENCES...

A NEW STANDARDIZED TEST!!!

SOMETHING TELLS ME THESE GUYS JUST DON'T GET IT.

MR. POLITICIAN



NIREA

Welcome to 2023. I hope you all have lots of fun, exciting things planned for the year. In January our program speaker was Britt Thurman from the North Idaho Museum. She talked about the purchasing and moving of the white house on Sherman Avenue to its new location at the base of Tubs Hill. This building will be the new home for the museum. There are going to be many and wonderful exciting things happening by this spring. If you are ever in Coeur d'Alene this summer or any other time, plan to visit the North Idaho Museum.

Our February meeting will have guest speaker, Theresa Newby. She is going to talk about her non-profit

organization, Newby-ginnings, that helps young men and women who are having a hard time after returning from serving our country.

In March we may have a superintendent or a state legislator as our speaker. In April we are hoping to see many of you at the state convention in Pocatello.

In closing I am saddened to announce the loss of one of our members and past state president, Mona Alfrey. She bravely fought three years against ovarian cancer passing away on February 1, 2023. She was a very dedicated member of our local group as well as at the state level. She will be truly missed.

Submitted by
Mary Williams
Secretary NIREA

Magic Valley REA

The Magic Valley Retired Educators met to start the 2022-2023 year in September at Rock Creek Park. It started out as a somewhat dreary day. But, as usual, the weather turned and it was a pleasant time. Unfortunately, it was not well attended. The picnic was opened to new members, but we have aged-out to a degree, and we don't have the contacts we used to have. In October, we met back at Idaho Pizza. Randy Wastradowski from the South Idaho Community Partnership was our guest speaker. We know about their Thanksgiving turkey collection and give away and their Food Bank, but they administer many other programs, many funded by government grants. These include family and individual assistance, water, energy and weatherization, and self help housing, which Randy is particularly interested in. It was very interesting--more than I expected! Dennis Sonius, former teacher and administrator, spoke to us in November. He is a collector of mini English autos. Following eating our pizza, we journeyed to his two-car garage. He had six cars stuffed in there. They were in amazing shape. He has even done some of the restoration. A few he has taken to sports rallies, decorated in the appropriated school colors. Other cars have served as Limos for Proms and/or Weddings. He has to be careful driving on public streets. The cars lack sufficient horsepower to keep up with current automobiles. It was neat presentation. We held our annual Christmas Party in December at our secretary Sharon Meek's home. As always the food and drink were great. During the holidays, we tried to help out a needy family. This year, we provided some

food and a food card, some clothing, and toys for a young mother and her son. January 2023's presentation was heart wrenching. Rob Sturgill, a local financial planner, took it upon his shoulders to help Ukrainian refugees and citizens. He has volunteered in Africa and in the Philippines, as well. He went to Poland and hired several vans to transport Ukrainian refugees into Poland, which he did. Somehow he got people to trust him, and show that he wasn't a conman trying to scam innocent Ukrainians out of their money or virtue. He even made it on Fox News. He then organized a clothes and goods drive to be sent to Ukraine. He helped set up a transportation network with other organizations to deliver more supplies and help. He continues to stay involved, and as of this writing was back in Poland and the Ukraine. He also showed a power point showing some of the devastation that has occurred there. When he took some of the pictures, he told of explosions occurring in the distance. Like I wrote, it was heart wrenching. Donations can be made to Type of Wood Charities Inc. on Facebook. For this February, we had an old "friend" Jim Gentry, retired history professor at CSI, speak to us about Twin Falls being in the Middle and on the Edge. Twin Falls lies between Rock Creek Canyon and the Shoshone Canyon which had some influence on Oregon Trail. Twin Falls also lies between Boise and Salt Lake, as well as between Boise and Pocatello. He reported on the political and economic impact of our location. For March, we are scheduled to hear from Marion Van Hofnen from the Mustard Seed Charity.

Ed Arndt
President MVREA

SOUTHEAST IDAHO RETIRED EDUCATORS

January

Ronda Black, president, called the meeting to order and introduced guests. Rick O'Bray led the pledge and the prayer.

Pete Black introduced the guest speaker Arlen Walker. He is a former high school teacher and local historian. He introduced the area known as the Triangle District. This area grew up in the late 1800's and early 1900's. This area was populated by various ethnic groups including African Americans, Greeks, Hispanics, Chinese and others. They came primarily to work on the railroad. They established their own shops, churches, bars and eateries. Pictures were shown of this area.

We have 78 members. Our food bank donations for October was \$200. Silent auction receipts from November and December total \$3506. This money will be used for scholarships at ISU College of Education.

Pledge card were handed out for the paver from SEIREA to be purchased for the ISU Alumni House.

February

Ronda Black, President, called the meeting to order and read a poem entitled Winter Garden. Kent Hobbs led the pledge and prayer.

Judy Ilday introduced the speaker Phil Joslin from the United Senior Project. Mr. Joslin was employed for many years at the Farm Bureau and became the CEO before retiring. He is now the president of the United Senior Project, the goal of which is to enrich lives through life long learning, health and overall wellness. Mr. Joslin shared a video of the vision for the project which is to build a new facility in Pocatello for Senior Citizens and New Knowledge Adventures. This building would have a large auditorium, kitchen, fitness and motion center, smaller lecture rooms, craft room, storage for Snake River New Horizons Band instruments and a library. He shared several ways of fund raising in the next year.

Food bank donations for January were \$148. Dona-

tions for scholarships total \$3,793. A presentation was made to Dean Jean McGivney-Burelle and Tabitha Butler for five scholarships to ISU College of Education.

Hall of Fame Nominees from our unit will be Jachie Cranor for 2021 and Roger Wheeler for 2023. The number of delegates for the April conference will be 8 rather than 7 from our unit.

March

The meeting was called to order by president Ronda Black. She read a poem entitled St. Patrick's Day Brings a promise. The pledge and prayer were led by Ron Bollinger.

Courtney Fisher from School District #25 Gave a short presentation on the Supple

mental Levey coming up for a vote on March 14th. Handout were given to everyone.

Pete Black introduced Ryan Sargent, ISU Alumni Director. He presented and update on ISU Bengal Alumni Center. He distributed picture and detail information regarding all the various uses for the center. It will open sometime in April. The new facility will not only be a place to gather with alumni and friends, but will also serve as an event center, display honorary alumni and have board and meeting rooms.

The food bank received \$148 last month. Pete Black announced that 72 member of 78 used the website to sign up for the March meeting. An all time high! Pete was ecstatic!!

An update on iSU College of Education Scholarships was announced. Five \$800 scholarships will be awarded.

Spotlight on member Bev Gillette and her husband Gene were honored for the establishment of the Gillette Family Scholarship. This will aid post-traditional students.

Submitted by

Mary Ann Hanson

SEIREA

