

SARTA NEWS

VOLUME 19 ISSUE 1

TO SERVE, NOT TO BE SERVED

February 2023

SARTA MEETINGS

The Springfield Area Retired Teachers Association (SARTA) meets on the Second Monday of the month at the South Street Christian Church in the fellowship hall.

Refreshments and Fellowship begin at 9:30 AM. followed by the Program at 10:00 AM. A business meeting follows the program.

The June and December meetings begin at 11:30 AM.

Dates to Remember

Monday, **March 20**,
Social 9:30 Program
10:00 am MRTA Staff

Monday, April 10,
Social 9:30 Program
10:00 Kendall
Slaughter, "Agri
Academy & Farm to
Schools"

Monday, May 8,
9:30 **Gillioz Theater**
322 Park Central East
Front Doors

Dr. Gernita Lathan Speaks to SARTA



The SARTA program on January 9 featured Springfield Superintendent, Dr. Gernita Lathan. Dr. Lathan talked about the many new programs being implemented in the school system. She told of the new strategic plan for the district which was developed last summer. She also informed SARTA members of an opportunity to volunteer in the SPS University program. This program meets two or three times a year and has several ways that volunteers can participate

in aiding students and staff of the Springfield Schools System. She encouraged members to look at ways to stay in touch or help staff as well as students. Springfield will be voting on Proposition S on April 4th. Proposition S asks voters to consider a request to issue general obligation bonds in the amount of \$220 million to fund critical school improvements that have been prioritized by a citizen task force that will impact every school in the district. You can view videos about each project at SPS.org/PropS.

Please note the change of date for the March meeting! March 20, the third Monday!

ARE YOUR DUES CURRENT?

Please keep your dues current. At \$15.00 you are getting a bargain! Membership is vital to every organization, but especially for the Springfield Area Retired Teachers Association (SARTA) and the Missouri Retired Teachers Association (MRTA). We are the only organizations working only for retirees and their benefits. MRTA dues are \$44 a year and can be sent to the state office at 3030 Dupont Circle, Jefferson City, MO 65109. SARTA dues are \$15 and can be sent to Carol Chappell 4524 S. Zane Ct. Springfield, 65804



2023 MRTA Legislative Platform

“MRTA is independent, non-partisan and does not endorse political candidates.”

RETIREMENT SYSTEM LEGISLATION AND POLICY

1. MRTA strongly supports the PSRS/PEERS of Missouri COLA statute. Cost-of-living adjustments are vital to the financial stability and security of our retirees.
2. MRTA will advocate for restoration of the cost-of-living Adjustment (COLA) the PSRS/PEERS Board of Trustees has reduced twice in the past twelve years. MRTA supports the restoration of the 2011 COLA Policy levels for PSRS/PEERS of Missouri retirees.
3. MRTA will advocate for PEERS retirees COLA eligibility to be consistent with PSRS statute.
4. MRTA supports a Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) increase for the retirees of the PSRS of the City of St. Louis (last increase was in 2006) and the PERS of Kansas City, MO (last increase was in 2008)
5. MRTA is opposed to any pension reductions for our active or retired teachers and education personnel (reducing the COLA, tiered plan, etc.)
6. MRTA will advocate for the preservation and protection of the strong financial integrity and transparency of PSRS/PEERS.

State Legislative Issues of Interest to MRTA

1. MRTA will work to protect the Missouri public pension retirement plans as defined benefit plans rather than defined contribution plans.
2. MRTA will support the current independent governance and decisions of the Boards of Trustees of the following public education retirement systems: PSRS/PEERS Retirement System, PSRS of Kansas City, MO and PSRS of the City of St. Louis.
3. MRTA supports the current statute mandated by Missouri law requiring the same health insurance premium cost and coverage for retirees as active public school employees.
4. MRTA will advocate for “equal and adequate” public funding of the Foundation Formula through a revision of the 2012 Standard Adequacy Target, which was capped at 2005 levels, to align with the current market and inflation levels. Missouri is currently ranked 50th in revenue spent on public schools at 30.7% while the national average is 40.1% on total revenue spent.
5. MRTA will oppose any legislation that would reduce state tax revenue for public school funding.
6. MRTA will oppose vouchers, education tax credits, educational scholarships, or any other use of tax dollars for nonpublic schools.
7. MRTA will oppose the statewide expansion of charter schools, support requiring the use of certificated teachers in virtual and charter schools to be members or retirees of PSRS, and support accountability for virtual and charter schools equal to that of public schools.
8. MRTA supports the recruitment and retention of public school teachers and educational staff. Teachers and educational staff matter most when it comes to student success.
9. MRTA will advocate for legislation to fully fund an increase in beginning teacher pay and average teacher salaries. Missouri is currently ranked 50th in beginning teacher pay and 45th in average teacher salaries.
10. MRTA will support the current statute which provides the Missouri income tax exemption for public education retirees that MRTA was instrumental in passing in 2007 (HB444)

Federal Legislative Issues of Interest to MRTA

1. MRTA will support legislation to repeal/modify the WEP (Windfall Elimination Provision) and GPO (Governmental Pension Offset) provisions of Social Security.
2. MRTA will oppose mandatory Social Security for new educator members of PSRS of Missouri.
3. MRTA will oppose privatization of Social Security. PEERS of Missouri, PSRS of St. Louis, and PSRS of Kansas City, Missouri benefit greatly from Social Security. MRTA does not support a reduction in current benefit levels.
4. MRTA supports accessible, cost-effective healthcare and prescription medications to promote financial security for all.
5. MRTA supports efforts that would encourage the recruitment and retention of teachers by decreasing student loan debt.

FROM OUR PRESIDENT by Sharon Jones

Greetings!

As we begin a new biennium let us all focus on those matters that result in the greatest positive impact on the lives of others. After all, we have survived 2020 the year of “COVID” establishing our place in history and learned just how important a computer and good internet access can be in our daily lives as we moved forward with ZOOM meetings and for some expanded our social network.

Although retired, each of us can have a positive impact on the futures of our children and partners in education as we support positive legislation and share our expertise as a mentor or volunteer assisting those who are still in the classroom.

SARTA is the one professional organization that offers you as a member the opportunity to lend support through community service projects, volunteer opportunities, hear from guest speakers, support positive legislative issues, opportunity for travel and networking. Simply put, SARTA is a powerhouse!

I encourage you to reach out and invite someone you know that has recently retired or is planning to retire this year and encourage them to join our ranks. I appreciate the privilege of serving as your president for this biennium and look forward to working with and for you during the upcoming year.

Legislative Day



On Valentine’s Day, Carolyn Henderson, Nadine Horner, and Sue Groves left early in the rain to travel to Jefferson City to attend the MRTA Legislative Day. The morning was full of hearing from Senator Rusty Black, Representatives Richard Brown, Mike Henderson, and Barry Hovis.

Also, the new MRTA lobbyist, Steve Carroll, MRTA Legislative Chair Randy McClain and Maria Walden.

After the meeting in the rotunda, each made contacts with their respective legislators.

When time to head home came, it was blowing and pouring rain. After a wait time for slowing rain we walked in the wind and rain to the café and car.

Hope you wrote or called your legislators. If you haven’t, please do even now. Let them know who you are and your concerns or thanks.

February Meeting



At the February 13 meeting, SARTA members heard from Jennifer Tennison with “Senior Age” of Missouri. She spoke of the many benefits of participating at Senior Centers in the area. There are 36 Senior Centers in 17 counties in Southwest Missouri. One primary purpose of Senior Age is to provide services and to help with needs so that senior citizens can remain in their own homes. Each center provides lunch Monday through Friday for a nominal cost and also have home-delivered meals. There are many activities at each center, including health, fitness and wellness programs along with social and recreational activities. There are many other services available like transportation, taxes, help with Medicare or other services.

Membership

Have you paid your dues? MRTA is \$44 and SARTA is \$15. Your dues help with the work to protect your pension. Share with a friend.

**SPRINGFIELD AREA
RETIRED TEACHERS ASSOCIATION**

8076 W Farm Rd 144 Springfield, MO 65802
www.springfieldarearetiredteachers.weebly.com

SARTA

"To Serve, Not to Be Served"

Elected Officers

President: Sharon Jones
PO Box 67 Blue Eye, 65611 527-0430
Vice-President Debbie Wilson
Secretary: Marilyn Ferguson
Treasurer: Carol Chappell
Assist. Treasurer Stella Sharp
Past President: Nadine Horner

Committee Chairs

Calling:
Cindy Bylander 496-4042
Publicity:
Debbie Wilson 830-3029
Chaplin:
Anne Gardner 831-3120
Community Service:
Carolyn Henderson 869-1189
Corresponding Secretary/ Sunshine:
Mark Gideon 773-8998
**Informative & Protective
services:**
Stella Sharp 323-2023
Historian:
Jacque White 350-1615
Legislative/MRTA Liaison:
Sue Groves 732-2192
Membership:
Carolyn Smith 399-0534
Program:
Debbie Wilson 830-3029
Retirement Education:
Nadine Horner 546-0370
Scholarship:
Carol Chappell 766-6851
Social:
Dana Young 576-0756

All are 417 area code

SARTA Meetings are on the Second Monday
At the South Street Christian Church.

Refreshments and Fellowship at 9:30 AM.
The Program is at 10:00 AM, followed by a Business Meeting.

How Current are Your Dues?

2023 Dues are now being accepted

TO FIND OUT IF YOUR DUES ARE PAID FOR THE YEAR, Call Carol Chappell at 766-6851. Please keep your dues current.

Please let us know if you move so we can keep your address updated. If you change e-mail address please let Debbie Wilson, or Carol Chappell know the new information.

CLIP out this membership application to use to pay your dues or give it to a friend and encourage them to join.

**Springfield Area Retired Teachers Association
Membership Application**

*Name _____ DOB ___/___/___

*mo *Day Year

Address _____ City _____

Zip _____ Phone _____ *Year retired _____

*Last School _____

*Grade level, area or position _____

*Number of years in Education _____

E-mail address _____

Only the * items will be shared with membership, all other information is used for the calling committee, SARTA mailings, and state reports.

Dues: \$15.00 a year. Send to Carol Chappell 4524 S. Zane Ct. Spfd 65804