

# News to Share

Henry County Retired Teachers Association  
O.R.T.A. Chapter Since 1968

HCRTA Meets on the Second Monday of March, May, July, September, November, and December at Oberhaus Park, Napoleon, Ohio

Website: [henrycountyrta.weebly.com](http://henrycountyrta.weebly.com)

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September 2023

## Mission Statement

The Henry County Retired Teachers Association continues its mission of encouraging scholarship, fostering volunteerism, providing an informed voice for retired teachers on issues relevant to their well-being, and presenting significant information in a congenial social setting.

## Vision Statement

Within five years, HCRTA will move to a position among the top five chapters in Ohio, as it builds upon its legacy of encouraging scholarship, fostering volunteerism, promoting, and protecting retiree interests, supporting advancement of public education in Ohio, developing a proactive membership.

## Next Meeting – September 11, 2023

The next meeting of HCRTA will be Monday, September 11th at 5:30pm. As usual the meeting will be held at Oberhaus Park in Napoleon.

PROGRAM – We will have a panel interview of two cross country coaches. Tim Atkinson, who lead the Patrick Henry girls to 8th place in the 2022 state meet, will come. Kenny Barnes, whose girls finished in fifth place at state will also be here.

MENU— Broasted pork chop, baked potato, applesauce, green beans, and dessert. Bottled water will be provided with packets for different flavorings.

## Meal Reservations



Meal costs are \$15.00 per person. We do have to guarantee the count to the caterer so if you make a reservation and then do not attend, we still must pay for the meal that was ordered and delivered. That means that you need to either send the \$15.00 or have another member take your reservation. The people who contact members before each meeting to gather reservation numbers ensure that we have a correct count for the caterer in plenty of time. Please help your caller (emailer) by responding to them by the deadline, with a **yes or no reply**. That way, they know that their

message to you was received. Linda Klamer handles reservations through a group of callers who email or phone 10 people each. We need to have your reservation back to your normal caller **by September 4th** or contact her directly if you cannot reach your caller. 330-671-8252.

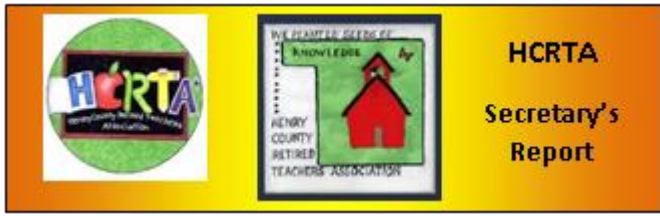
## Hosts/Hostesses

The hosts/hostesses bring a centerpiece for the tables and are responsible for the meal prayer. It can be seasonal or relate to the program topic or it could be a collection or hobby that a member has. Table coverings are provided. Members of the executive board have signed up for some of the months. If you would like to volunteer, call Bev! If everyone takes a turn it would be great!

## September 11th - Meeting Volunteers

More setup volunteers are needed for other meetings. If you can help, call Bev. 419-256-6142

Set Up (Doors unlocked at 4:30pm)		Hostess Committee	
Charlie Meyer	Terry Witt	Charlotte Shrider	Jan Schlade
Help Needed	Help Needed		
Volunteers are needed after the meeting to put away tables and chairs.			



## Henry County Retired Teachers Association Secretary's Report – July 10, 2023

The Henry County Retired Teachers Association meeting for July was called to order by President Bev Wittes. Following the Pledge of Allegiance and prayer, President Bev recognized the hosts Roland and Janice Rettig as well as the setup volunteers Greg Merrill and Charlie Meyer. The tables were dismissed by choosing picnic ants.

Following the meal, Patty Hill introduced the Book Grant winners, Addyson Speiser, Callie Seedorf, Amanda Seiler, Madison Perry and Bryson Brown.

Jason Kryder and Mary Rettig were present to give exciting information about the Napoleon Library Renovation Project.

President Wittes opened the meeting. The treasurer and secretary's report were approved as printed in the newsletter.

### Committee Reports:

**Courtesy-** Mary Jane Myrice has moved to the Manor in Bowling Green and Margaret Mueller is in Fairlawn, Archbold.

**Community Service-** Jan Schalde reported Tom Jenny and Bev Wittes as the top volunteers.

### Old Business:

Brochures to promote membership are ready to print and will be distributed at the September meeting.

### New Business:

Discussion was held on a new project for the BACK TO SCHOOL year. Members were asked to bring school supplies to the September meeting. These items will be packed into boxes to be delivered to the county schools along with promotional brochures. It was decided that the boxes will be put in the Elementary this year with Middle school and High school next year.

Patty Hill made a motion to participate in this project. Faith Hill seconded the motion.

Linda Wagner, Patty Hill, Mary Ann Wade and Bev Wittes volunteered to deliver the boxes.

Rosemary Phau recommended the members go see *Sound of Freedom* a movie in the theaters about Human trafficking.

Charlie Meyer announced details about the September 11, 2023 meeting @ 5:30. The speakers will be a panel of Cross Country coaches from Holgate, PH and Liberty Center.

Marlene Jones won the 50/50.

Linda Wagner made a motion to adjourn. Becky Schindler seconded the motion. Meeting was adjourned.

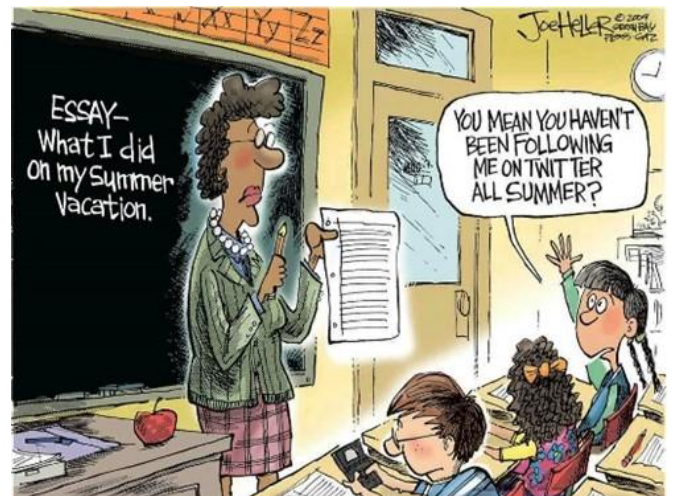
Respectfully Submitted,  
Pam Schwiebert, HCRTA Secretary

### From the President's Pen – Bev Wittes

Teachers, even those of us who are retired, will no doubt always associate September with back-to-school time. This is true even though nowadays school most often begins in late August. Our active teacher colleagues face different challenges than most of us did when we first began teaching, but some things never change... summer ends too quickly and there is that conflict of wanting more time off and the excitement of preparing for a new group of students.

Our current project to collect school supplies for the elementary teachers in our four local Henry County districts is one small way for we who are retired to show our continued support and encouragement to those who are in the classrooms. If you know an active teacher personally, reach out with an offer to volunteer or just lend a sympathetic ear. I am sure that they would appreciate it! When it is time for them to retire, we hope that they will join our ranks and continue the legacy long into the future.

Bev



## **NOTE OF CHEER**

If anyone knows of a member who needs a “note of cheer” due to illness, struggles, or loss please contact our cheer coordinators. Sandy Honemann (419-274-7194) handles members south of the river and Marlene Jones (419-533-4788) handles those north of the river.

## **DO NOT CALL LIST - RESERVATIONS**

If you are on the “Do Not Call List” but plan to attend the next HCRTA meeting, you can phone your reservation to Linda Klamer at 330-671-8252 or email her at [L.Klamer51@yahoo.com](mailto:L.Klamer51@yahoo.com).

## **DIRECTORY UPDATES**

If your address, phone, or email changes please be sure to notify our membership chairperson, Steve Seagrave so we can be sure the directory gets updated, and you get association meeting and program information.

## **STRS UPDATE – Steve Seagrave**

Below is an address to the STRS board delivered by Dean Dennis, ORTA President, at the monthly STRS Board meeting on August 17<sup>th</sup>.



### What are risky investments?

Perhaps investments with hidden fees and non-disclosure agreements that not even our Board members are allowed to see. Such as the Private Equity investments found in our Alternative Investments portfolio.

These risky investments were addressed in the 12/29/2022 State Auditors Report. Concerns were raised regarding fee disclosure. Page 24 of the report reads, *"Given the longstanding issues about PE fee completeness, the Ohio legislature should consider legislation restricting the kinds of PE funds the state pension funds can invest in, such as requiring state pension funds to obtain certain fee disclosures that can be made public as a precondition to using an external asset management firm."*

Since 2010, our Alternative Investment portfolio has tripled from 7% of our portfolio to 21%. It's problematic because we can't audit the fair value of this portfolio which accounts for approximately \$19 billion dollars. Instead, we rely upon 130 General Partners to tell us the fair value of 130 investments. If you read an STRS Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, you might come across this disclosure, *"Due to the nature*

*of Alternative Investments, substantially all investments in this asset class are valued using market-based inputs that are comparable, but subjective in nature due to the lack of widely observable inputs."* Again, these investments are, *"subjective in nature due to the lack of widely observable inputs."*

More questions about PE investments. In 2020, members raised \$75,000 to conduct a Forensic Audit. The audit never was completed due to requested paperwork over transparency being withheld by STRS management. Benchmark Financial Services and STRS are now in a court battle over these transparency issues. Why are some Board members supporting legal efforts which hide fees and NDA's in our investments and obscure the fair value of these investments?

There's a Code in Ohio. It's Section 3307.15 of the ORC. It is titled *Investment and fiduciary duties of board.* Section (e) of the code states, *"Any statement of financial position distributed by the board shall include the fair value, as the statement date, of all investments held by the board under this section."*

In conclusion, Members of the Board, in my opinion, when you are unable to audit 21% of the investments in our portfolio, they become illegal investments. I believe holding them in our portfolio is actionable. An independent legal opinion needs to be sought as to if public monies can be used in investments which cannot be independently audited, have hidden fees and NDA's. This needs to become a top priority. Thank you.

## **GET INVOLVED!**

- WRITE TO STRS
- CONTACT YOUR STATE SENATOR
- CONTACT YOUR STATE REPRESENTATIVE
- JOIN ORTA
- CONTRIBUTE TO THE PENSION DEFENSE FUND

## **50/50 RAFFLE**

Remember to bring some extra cash for our usual 50/50 raffle. The profit all goes to our general fund which is used to cover the rental of our meeting place.



<b>HENRY COUNTY RETIRED TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION</b>				
	<b>Gregg Merrill, Treasurer</b>	<b>Duane Ressler, Asst. Treas.</b>	<b>July 31, 2023</b>	
<u>Date</u>	<u>Ck #/payee</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Balance</u>
July 3		<b>starting balance</b>		<b>\$3,714.81</b>
June 1	Civista Bank	Service Charge	(\$10.00)	\$3,704.81
July 10	Ck # 1415 City of Napoleon	Rental Fee	(\$90.00)	\$3,614.81
July 10	Ck # 1416 Bev Wittes	Tablecloths	(\$29.94)	\$3,584.87
July 12	Deposit	50/50, Foundation, Lifewise donations	\$175.00	\$3,759.81
July 31	Civista Bank	Service Charge	(\$10.00)	\$3,749.81
	Ck #1417 Steve Seagrave	Uncashed – lost	\$74.93	\$3,824.74
		<b>Balance =</b>		\$3,824.74
	CD Balance as of Aug. 3	Henry County Bank (Interest)	\$31.88	<b>\$1,403.59</b>
Aug. 3		<b>BALANCE ALL ACCOUNTS =</b>		<b>\$5,228.33</b>

**FOUNDATION MEETING** – The next meeting will be September 12<sup>th</sup> at 1:00pm at Patty Hill’s home. The grants chairperson is a nonvoting member appointed by the president for one-year terms. The bylaws do allow the Foundation Board to appoint officers, as needed, who are not elected members of the board. Gene is serving in that capacity. Jamie Bostelman will be going off the board so we will need to elect a new member in December.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Year Term Ends</b>
Gene Grime	Treasurer	N/A
Terry Witt	Grants Chairperson	N/A
Jamie Bostelman	Member	2023
Patty Hill	President	2024
Janet Aschemeier	Secretary	2024
Karen Maassel	Vice President, Agent	2025
Kirk Fruth	Member	2026
Larry Zachrich	Member	2026
Diane Meyer	Member	2027



**REMINDER** - At the July meeting, it was decided to collect school supplies for teachers in the four Henry County local districts at our September meeting. These items may include anything teachers in the elementary buildings in our districts may use—pencils, erasers, paper clips, scissors, tape, pens, glue sticks, markers, crayons, etc., etc... you remember all those things and many more that you probably purchased out of your pocket too when you were teaching. You could also choose to bring individually packaged snack items to include in the boxes, always a welcome sight in any teacher’s lounge! We will also include a few of the updated brochures recently printed to let our active teachers know more about HCRTA.

**Send a Friend a Note of Good Cheer!**

Robert C. Baker c/o West Chester Assisted Living & Memory Care Center, 6267 Glen Hollow Township, OH 45011

*If you know of updates needed to this list, contact Sandy Honemann or Marlene Jones.*



**DONATION OPPORTUNITY**

We would like to give those of you that can't attend meetings the chance to contribute to our chapter's causes. At the December meeting we decided to support the **LifeWise Academy**. Members who do attend regularly might also want to consider writing a check to simplify things and to have a record of your giving. Thanks for considering this worthwhile project!

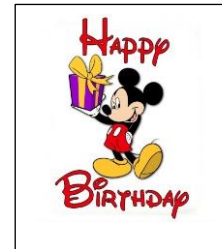
Enclosed is a check for my donation to support this cause.

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ to be donated to \_\_\_\_\_

**Gregg Merrill**  
 HCRТА Treasurer  
 1500 Thershan Drive  
 Napoleon, Ohio 43545

**Birthday List** – Here is the list for those who like to send birthday wishes.

Sep. 04	Schroeder, Jack	Oct. 24	Roby, Susan D
Sep. 06	Wade, Mary Ann Wade	Oct. 24	Short, Delores
Sep. 08	Weaver, Sally J	Oct. 27	Aschemeier, Janet
Sep. 10	Wittes, Beverly Ann	Nov. 05	Bostelman, Jamie
Sep. 15	Helberg, Kathryn J	Nov. 05	Krauskopf, Linda *
Sep. 20	Hibbard, Jane	Nov. 07	Jameson, Colleen A
Sep. 20	Merrill, Gregg	Nov. 09	Shinn, Delbert P *
Sep. 24	Meyer, Konnie *	Nov. 10	George, James
Sep. 24	Pfau, Rosemary G	Nov. 13	Long, Larry E
Oct. 02	Gill, Linda L	Nov. 14	Kim Spiess
Oct. 06	Gramling, Vicki	Nov. 15	Ritchey, Gary
Oct. 07	Rettig Janice J	Nov. 20	Krugh, Susan *
Oct. 16	Mengerink, Richard	Nov. 22	Hetrick, Lee *
Oct. 18	Burson, Susan L	Nov. 22	Jones, Marlene
Oct. 20	Jenny, Tom R	Nov. 25	Goertz, Cheri
Oct. 22	Schlosser, Bruce E	Nov. 27	Barlow, Linda
Oct. 23	Phillips, Bev		



**ORTA Web Site**

Below is the ORTA web site. Check there for information and links.

- Update your membership information.
- Sign up for email alerts.
- Read ORTA newsletters.
- Check member benefits.
- Contribute to the Pension Defense Fund

<http://www.orta.org/>

## HCRT FOUNDATION – Donation Form

The Foundation solicits, receives, and invests gifts of money and property of every kind. Members are encouraged to promote memorial and honorary gifts to the Foundation. Gifts to the HCRT Foundation are tax deductible.

NOTE: Gifts to the Foundation may ONLY be used for our book grants and associated costs such as postage, etc. They may NOT be used for regular HCRTA expenses or programs.

### The HCRT Foundation is a 501C3 organization.

I would like to help a future teacher by donating to the Book Grant program of the Henry County Retired Teachers Association.

Send donations to Gene Grime, HCRT Foundation Treasurer, 192 Old Creek Drive, Napoleon, OH 43545.

Make checks payable to “**Henry Co. Retired Teachers Foundation**”.

My donation preference is:

Lois Griffith Book Grant

Roger King Book Grant

Margaret & Lucille Sherman Book Grant

Karen Brubaker Book Grant

Undesignated

HCRTA

735 Sheffield

Napoleon OH 43545

postage

Member

Address