

NSEA-RETIRED ADVOCATE

www.nsea.org/retired

September 2022

Volume 18, Issue 1

NSEA-RETIRED OFFICERS

Dr. De Tonack,
NSEA-Retired
President
dtonack@neb.rr.com



Roger Rea, Vice President
roger.omaha@gmail.com

Dr. Sarah Brown, Secretary
travelersarah@hotmail.com

Arlene Rea, Treasurer
arlenerea36@yahoo.com

DISTRICT DIRECTORS

Pat Etherton, Capitol
petherton123@gmail.com

Dr. Margie Nowak, Capitol
margienowak@hotmail.com

Tom Black, Elkhorn
tomwpc6296@gmail.com

Ruby Davis, Metro
deltard4@gmail.com

Walta Sue Dodd, Metro
wsdodd@aol.com

Joy Brown, Panhandle
joyb1302@gmail.com

Maureen Nickels, Sandhills
earth1@rocketmail.com

Jan Barnason, Tri-Valley
jkbarnason@gmail.com

If you are not receiving emails from the NSEA-Retired list or your email address has changed, send a message to dtonack@neb.rr.com.

Celebrating the Profession Across Nebraska



*Joy Brown
with members!*

This summer, retired members, new retirees and active members gathered across the state to celebrate the profession while enjoying conversation, food and prizes.

New NSEA-Retired Board Panhandle District Director Joy Brown gathered with several other retired members in Chadron on July 18. Joy and retirees joined NSEA Organizational Specialist Andrea Longoria to kick-off the upcoming school year and thank members for their work.

NSEA Executive Director Trish Guinan also attended the

Chadron meeting. Guinan is shown with retired member and NSEA Board Member from the Panhandle, Marina Garner.

A similar Panhandle gathering was held in Scottsbluff on July 28 and in Ogallala on Aug. 3.



Garner & Guinan



Ockinga and Davis

Kearney Fun!

Cunningham's By the Lake in Kearney proved to be a great, fun place for local retirees to visit while welcoming and thanking new retiring educators on June 14. Newly-retired Kathleen Ockinga shared the book "The Better Half: Nebraska's Hidden Treasures" by Matthew and Sarah Hansen with NSEA-Retired

member Roger Davis. Davis was the winner of the book from a prize drawing.

Jane Teply, a long-time Kearney resident who retired from Elm Creek Schools, was the winner of a one-year annual membership to NSEA/NEA-Retired. Congratulations, Teply!

More Celebrations to Come!

NSEA-Retired hopes to continue offering similar gatherings across the state for retired members throughout the coming year while encouraging other retirees to join. Please contact De Tonack, NSEA-Retired President, if you would like to help host such an event.



Book Giveaway!



NEA Representative Assembly Delegates (from left to right) Pat Etherton, Arlene Rea, De Tonack and Susan Stake.



RA Delegates: (Back) Arlene Rea and De Tonack. (Front) Pat Etherton and Roger Rea.

Masked in Chicago

NSEA-Retired qualified for six representatives at both the NEA Retired Annual Meeting followed by the NEA Representative Assembly (RA), both held in Chicago this summer. Masks were a cautionary mandate for the in-person meetings.

Pat Etherton, Roger Rea, Arlene Rea and De Tonack all masked up for the in-person RA, while Dan Schiefelbein, Columbus, participated in both meetings via the virtual connection. Retired delegate Walta Sue Dodd, Omaha, also participated via the virtual connection. This was the first time attendees were given an option to join meetings in-person or virtually.

The Retired Annual meeting had more than 300 participants. RA had more than 4,000 in-person delegates and more than 1,000 delegates joining virtually.

Discussions and support were voiced on federal legislation to change the Social Security benefit exclusions for those who have been employed in education. This legislation affects benefits in several states, but Nebraska is not affected.

State retired presidents announced

their annual contributions to the Kinnaman Scholarship Fund. Nebraska contributed several donations in honor of John Jensen, a Nebraska and NEA Retired Association leader who was a strong supporter of this fund.



Delegate Pat Etherton holds a sign in support of a resolution.

Five scholarships to Aspiring Educators were granted this year from the fund. Fundraising events for the NEA Fund for Children and Education were a successful part of the annual meeting, with both online auctions and silent auction items. Nebraska has continued success with our donation offering of a gift certificate for Omaha Steaks.

RA's first new business item to pass was for "NEA to issue a National Call to Action to ensure that all students, educators, schools, campuses, and communities are safe from gun violence."

Other business items dealt with several different topics and can be viewed online at www.nea.org.ra.



Newsletter Recognized at NEA Annual Meeting

The Lincoln Education Association-Retired newsletter received Special Recognition at the NEA-Retired Annual Meeting in June while in Chicago. Pictured above are Margie Nowak, LEA-Retired President who also serves on the Communication Committee for NEA-Retired and Paula Buckner who is the editor for the LEA-Retired newsletter.

2022 NSEA-Retired Fall Conference

Register Online

Tuesday, October 18, 2022
Grand Island Ramada Inn
2503 South Locust St., Grand Island

Monday, October 17: Pre-Conference gathering from 7 - 10 p.m. at the Ramada hospitality room.

Tuesday, October 18: Fall Conference

- 8:15 a.m. - 9 a.m. – Registration
- 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. – Conference

Opening Session: Music from Around the World, David Marsh, Humanities Nebraska

Breakouts (select two):

- Biking Across the U.S., Jude and Bill Lammert
- CASA (Court-Appointed Special Advocate), Erin Howe, CASA Grand Island
- SHIIP (Senior Health Insurance Information Program), Ann Kroeger, SHIIP representative.

**Morning refreshments and lunch are free for members; additional guest registration is \$10 per guest.*

Afternoon Session:

- Safety in Numbers: 4 Lessons in Cyber Security, Ryan Sothan, Outreach Coordinator
Neb. Attorney General's Office

**We'll end the afternoon with dessert and prizes. The quilt raffle with donations going to the NSEA Children's Fund will conclude in the afternoon with drawings for the two winners.*



**Former LEA President Rita Bennett
with Capitol Rep. Pat Etherton.**

Register By October 11: Register online at www.nsea.org/retired at Calendar, Registration & Events.
For questions or assistance, contact De Tonack, dtonack@neb.rr.com.



CORE (Call On Retired Educators)

NSEA-Retired members continue to help the Association through CORE (Call On Retired Educators). Nancy Fulton, retired member and past NSEA President along with Sarah Brown, current secretary of the NSEA-Retired Board, answered the call to help at NSEA University in Lincoln, July 12-14. Fulton and Brown welcomed attendees to the event while assisting with conference registration.



Using Crop Art for Social Justice and Politics

NSEA-Retired member Art Tanderup was joined by John Quigley, a world-renowned aerial artist from California, for a special presentation at NSEA University in July. Quigley and Tanderup have traveled to many states to help design, plow and cut environmental and political crop images. Crop art is viewable from the sky. Quigley's work also includes creating art by arranging people into images and social justice messages.

New NSEA-Retired Board Members



JOY BROWN

Two new NSEA-Retired board members are Jan Barnason, Tri-Valley, returning to the position after several years of service from Guy Roggenkamp, and Joy Brown, Panhandle, who will take over for Twila Griffiths of Scottsbluff.

Brown is excited to represent the Panhandle/High Plains NSEA-Retired district. She retired in 2019 after teaching science for 40 years at Hyannis. Brown is a Chadron State College graduate. She moved to Hyannis for what was supposed to be six months following her graduation. That six months turned into 44 years with the district. Joy has spent the last two and a half years visiting Scottsbluff for medical reasons and is very thankful for her

retired teacher colleagues and neighbors who helped her.



JAN BARNASON

Jan Barnason retired from Hastings Public Schools and since then has served on the NSEA-R Board as Tri Valley Director and Secretary. She is currently Vice President of Platte Valley Retired Educators Association, which meets in Grand Island and Hastings. Her goals include increasing membership and membership participation. She looks forward to hearing from members, welcomes new ideas and will work for compromise.

Barnason loves to travel and has visited six continents. Her seventh continent, Antarctica, is now on her soon-to-visit list!

Health Insurance is vital for retirees!

Article By: Roger Rea, NSEA-Retired Vice President

Having the right health insurance is an important factor in maintaining a robust retirement for today's seniors. NSEA-Retired members younger than age 65 typically maintain the Blue Cross health insurance they had as active employees by subscribing to Educators Health Alliance (EHA) plans on a direct-bill basis. There are several options for EHA insurance for pre-65 retirees. A video describing the various plans, as well as the current rates for each plan, can be found on the EHA website, www.chaplan.org. Click on the "Retirees" tab at the top of the page for access to the details.

Medicare Part A

Medicare is available to retirees at age 65. Traditional Medicare has several "parts" that you sign up for that provide various benefits. **Medicare Part A** has no premium so long as you paid into Social Security for a minimum of 40 quarters (10 years). Enrollment in Medicare Part A is automatic for retirees who are receiving their Social Security benefit when they turn 65. If you delay your Social Security until a later age, you need to apply for Medicare Part A when you turn 65. Medicare Part A pays for hospital visits.

Medicare Part B

Medicare Part B is optional, covers doctor's visits and durable medical equipment, and has a premium. The standard monthly premium for Medicare Part B for 2022 is \$170.10. If your modified adjusted gross income from two years ago was \$91,000 or less (for a single filer -- \$182,000 for married filing jointly) you will pay the standard Part B premium. If your income exceeded those levels, your premium will be higher [up to \$578.30 if your income exceeded \$500,000 (single) or \$750,000 (married filing jointly)]. If you don't sign up for Medicare Part B when you are first eligible (typically at age 65 unless continuing on an employer plan), there is a permanent premium surcharge applied to any late enrollees.

Educators' Medicare Supplement

Both Medicare Part A and Part B have deductibles and coinsurance that you must pay in addition to the premiums. Most retirees choose to buy a Medicare Supplement to cover part or all of those extra charges. The BCBS of Nebraska Educators' Medicare Supplement is available to either those moving over from an EHA plan or those who are members of NEA/NSEA Retired as well as their spouses. **The Educators' Medicare Supplement** offers both a Plan F and a Plan G supplement option – the only difference is that the Plan F supplement pays the Part B deductible (\$233 for 2022); the Plan G supplement does not.



Medicare Part D

In addition to a Medicare supplement, retirees on Medicare may need to sign up for a **Medicare Part D** drug plan to cover the cost of their prescription drugs. Since the number and names of drugs that seniors take vary widely with the individual, there is no single **Part D** drug plan that is right for everyone. The best way to select a provider for your drugs is to use the Medicare website, www.medicare.gov, and enter the names and dosages for the drugs that you take. It is important to sign up for a Medicare Part D plan during your initial enrollment period to avoid a late enrollment penalty. The penalty amount depends upon how long you went without Part D or creditable prescription drug coverage.

One Final Caution

Drug plans can change the drugs they cover; move drugs to a higher tier (meaning a higher copayment for you); and change the list of preferred pharmacies for their plan every year! It is always wise to consult the Medicare website every year during open enrollment for Part D plans (from October 15 to December 7) to determine which Part D plan is best for you the following year.

**Have an article idea for the NSEA-Retired Advocate or the NSEA Voice magazine?
Send your idea to Dr. De Tonack at dtonack@neb.rr.com**



Self-Care IS Caring

Article By: Betsy Carroll, BSN, Wellness,
Program Manager, EHA Wellness

Summertime...retired and ready to live the good life! A little relaxation, time to connect with others and finally take care of yourself. Then, you wake up and discover that you are just as busy now as you were when you were working full time—and maybe you are caring for others as well. Yet again, self-care seems like a luxury, only attainable by others without responsibilities or with lots of time on their hands. The good news is that while practicing self-care is a necessity, it does not need to be complicated, expensive, time-consuming or far-reaching.

WHAT IS SELF-CARE?

There are many definitions out there, but simply put: Self-care is anything we do on purpose — or refrain from doing — with our own well-being in mind. Types of self-care may include anything that promotes physical, emotional, psychological or even spiritual well-being.

WHY DOES SELF-CARE MATTER?

Not only can self-care alleviate feelings of stress and anxiety, it better prepares you for the demands of life. Whether that's work, family or something else, you're only able to help those around you when you've taken proper care of yourself.

“Again, it's about being deliberate,” says psychologist Matthew Sacco, PhD. “It's participating in activities that you value. It doesn't have to be overly complicated. It's just that planned, intentional aspect that you look at for promoting your well-being.

“Doing this kind of work thoughtfully, in a very planned way, is absolutely a vital part of being more effective in the world around us,” he adds. (clevelandclinic.org; 2-15-22).

WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE?

Self-care means doing things for ourselves that are going to help us have our needs met. Sometimes that means prioritizing sleep, remembering to eat breakfast, getting fresh air, making time for exercise, going to health appointments, or asking for help. Self-care might mean taking your medica-

tion on time, confronting a toxic friend, doing meal prep in advance, saying no to something, or simply getting a haircut. Contrary to popular belief, self-care is often boring – and that's okay.

If you are able to incorporate some leisure activities that elicit feelings of joy and relaxation, that can be another critical part of your self-care. Once you have your basic needs met, try to think about ways to integrate positive activities. Again, this does not need to be extravagant. Sometimes slowing down for a jigsaw puzzle, a family board game, or a living room movie night can boost our mental health.

Throughout the day, you might allow yourself small breaks to read magazines, color, journal, play with your pet, or listen to music. For when you have more time, self-care activities might include doing some yoga, shopping online, visiting a neighbor, jogging, taking pictures, going to a park, learning a new hobby or checking out a museum. Understanding what works best for you might mean learning more about yourself and getting curious about what helps you and what doesn't. This can mean exploring lots of different ways to de-stress, holding onto the ones that work and throwing out the ones that don't. **The more we practice intentionally making time for our own self-care, the more resilient we become.**

If you are an **EHA Wellness** member, caring for yourself may be as simple as signing up for our wellness challenges throughout the year to motivate and encourage your journey. Our next bi-monthly challenge, **Paint Your Plate**, began on Aug. 1, but our **Core Wellness Trackers** can be used anytime to keep up with exercise, healthy eating, sleep, hydration and mindfulness practice. The daily challenge emails include wellness information, motivation to get you moving, and healthy recipes to keep you fueled.

To sign up for challenges or find more information, log into www.ehawellness.org.

Questions? Contact EHA Wellness at contact@ehawellness.org. *The EHA Wellness program is ONLY available to those on the EHA BCBS Medical Plan or the EHA BCBS (Direct Pay) Retiree Medical Plan.*

COMING SOON!

Good News! As a retiree, you are still eligible for the EHA Wellness program if you are under 65 and insured by the EHA BCBS Medical Plan or the EHA BCBS (Direct Pay) Retiree Medical Plan! Here is what is coming up for the 2022-23 program year:

October: It's Time to Move! We all know that moving the body is one of the best things you can do for your health. **Pump It Up**, the October challenge offered by EHA Wellness, will focus on the importance of exercise and strength training, provide tips, and bring daily inspiration to get you moving in the right direction! Just for signing up, you'll receive a set of resistance exercise bands!

December: Looking Inward... Sign up for **Focused In** in December, then get ready to uplift your own well-being and that of others along the way. You will be inspired to incorporate opportunities for gratitude, affirmation, movement and mindfulness generosity toward your own wellbeing and happiness. You will also receive challenge emails each day with healthy tips, recipes, and a link to track your progress.

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Nebraska FALL SEMINARS

NSEA-Retired has partnered with Blue Cross Blue Shield of Nebraska to bring information about Medicare and the Educators' Medicare Supplement in October and November.

The Educators Medicare Supplement is available to those sliding over from an EHA plan as well as NSEA-Retired members and spouses. The dates and places are listed in the included chart. Visit Nebraskablue.com/NSEASeminars to register for in-person or online events at least one week prior to the date you plan to attend. Although there is no cost, registration is required and a valid email address is needed to complete your registration for the in-person meetings and the webinars.

After the conclusion of the meetings, a copy of the webinars will be available at www.ehaplan.org/retiree-info and www.nsea.org/retired selecting Retirement & Insurance. BCBSNE will be sending an invitation letter.

In-Person Sessions

Morning sessions: 9:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. (check in at 9 a.m.)
Afternoon sessions: 1:30 p.m. – 3 p.m. (check in at 1 p.m.)

Kearney	Thursday, Oct. 27 Educational Service Unit 10 – Room B, (76 Plaza Boulevard, Kearney)
Lincoln	Tuesday, Nov. 1 Jack J. Huck Continuing Education Center – Rooms 303 and 304, (301 South 68th Street Place)
Norfolk	Friday, Nov. 4 Northeast Community College – Lifelong Learning Center, Suites F and G, (801 East Benjamin Avenue)
Omaha	Thursday, Nov. 10 Omaha Public Schools Teacher Administrative Center Tac – Board Room, (3215 Cumming Street)

Webinars:

Tuesday, Oct. 25, 2 to 3 p.m

Thursday, Nov. 3, 9 a.m. to 10 a.m.

Monday, Nov. 7, 2 p.m to 3 p.m.

Wednesday, Nov. 9, 9 a.m. to 10 a.m



For the second year, Lincoln Education Association-Retired hosted a “Come and Get It” event for teachers new to Lincoln Public Schools. Sheri Paden, LEA-Retired helped arrange the event and along with other members.

Volunteers sorted the donated items that ranged from tissues, pens, markers,

bulletin boards, games and puzzles, to books and much more! Donations were received from LEA-Retired members, NSEA-Retired, a chapter of Delta Kappa Gamma teacher honorary as well as items remaining from an earlier, similar event held by the Omaha Education Association.

Seeking your input!



NSEA-Retired is again seeking an NEA-Retired grant to help fund local retired groups host gatherings to both thank new retirees and expand retired membership. The grant will continue to provide additional support for Aspiring Educators and Educators Rising groups in their work and needs. NSEA-Retired is looking for ways to expand our reach in the profession. Send your idea to De Tonack at dtonack@neb.rr.com



Civil Rights Awards Dinner

Nebraska participants at the Human and Civil Rights Awards Dinner held July 2 in Chicago. OutNebraska received the Virginia Uribe Memorial Award for Creative Leadership in Human Rights. This award goes to a nominee whose activities in human rights significantly impact education and the achievement of equal opportunity for those facing discrimination due to their sexual orientation. Accepting the award was OutNebraska Executive Director Abbi Swatsworth, front row, center of the photo. OutNebraska is a statewide advocacy, lobbying, and community organization, which strives to improve the quality of life for LGBTQ+ Nebraskans.

Vote in the General Election on Nov. 8!

Passing beneficial education and school financing laws – and stopping bad ones – starts at the ballot box by electing State Board of Education members, state Senators and a Governor who support public education!

You can register to vote or update your information by going to www.nebraska.gov/apps-sos-voter-registration. To vote at your polling place on election day Nov. 8 the completed application must be submitted by Oct. 21.

You can request a vote by mail ballot by going to www.nsea.org/EarlyVoter. Applications for a General Election ballot must be received by 6 p.m., Oct. 21.

NSEA Recommended Candidate information can be found at www.nsea.org/2022general

Candidate Volunteers are urgently needed. Contact Cathy Schapmann at cathy.schapman@nsea.org or 800-742-0047 to receive information on upcoming candidate events and volunteer when you can.