



NEA-New Mexico

RETIRED



The Official Newsletter of NEA-New Mexico Retired Members

September 2011

Vol. 6 1

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

By *Debbie Schoonover*



Isn't it amazing how time can go by so quickly? It seems like I just met many of you at the Regional Retired NEA Conference in April and now it is already September. This retirement stuff is still new to me, but I thought I would have lots of time to do different things that had been waiting for me to have time. It is confusing.

The conference was so much fun and I truly enjoyed meeting those of you there and getting to know you a little better. There was a day of Presidents' meetings before the conference and I learned a lot but unfortunately, not enough to feel confident in this role. I do know that the field is wide open and whatever we want to do is really up to us. Through the conference, I came to realize what an important role retired educators have in the NEA organization. We have been in the situations that our colleagues are now going through and we certainly have knowledge of what can help and what can hurt. I realized that our input is very much listened to and appreciated. More importantly, I realized that we can still be an asset to education and educators. We ain't done yet baby! We need to step up and continue to fill the shoes of an educator which is something we all know well. Those shoes might not be educating children as before, but now educating teachers, politicians, administrators, and anyone else who needs an Education 501 class on how to make it work. As hosts of the conference, New Mexico members did a TERRIFIC job of making the attendees feel very welcome. I received LOTS of positive feedback about how wonderfully kind you all were. Thanks Bunches! It was really fun being hosts because then we were in charge and supposedly knew

everything about it. Our responsibility was to be nice, kind of a piece of cake.

An easy job for sure. I heard good things about the presentations; I was presenting and didn't get to go to the others, but I am glad people found them worthwhile. I don't know when we will have the opportunity to have it in NM again, but I am glad it was here now and I am very proud we were able to have such a strong attendance. You guys are AWESOME!

Our annual meeting is going to be Nov. 4th with Delegate Council on Nov. 5th. I am hoping to do some brainstorming and finalize some decisions on things we want to accomplish. We need some goals and some gung-ho people to chair committees and get things going. If you will be there, bring ideas to share. We will be discussing a grant that we received from NEA that Pat Jacquez and I wrote. I am thrilled that we received it. It will allow us to have more people at the legislative training that NEA-NM does each January. If this is something you are interested in, please be sure to let me know so I can put you on the list of hopefuls.

I know we are all retired and our responsibilities should be small, but I also know that we have all served in the educational field for many years and that is drilled into our hearts and our soul. Don't just push it aside! If you have a desire to still be involved, let's find a way to do that. You still have the opportunity to be the shining light for a student or a teacher. Let's keep our lights shining. If you have any ideas or suggestions for your NEA Retired group and will not be at the board meeting, please email me and let me know. Thanks for everything! I am proud to say I am NEA-NM Retired President and I want you to be able to say you are proud of your membership too.

Thank you!

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The NM Educational Retirement Board

By Mary Lou Cameron

The NM Educational Retirement Board is made up of dedicated members who consider the long-term sustainability of our members' retirement benefits as one of its primary duties.

Our current Board members are Vice Chair Russell Goff of NMAER; Secretary Brad Day appointed by the Governor; Dr. Beulah Woodfin who represents the AARP; Delman Shirley appointed by the Governor; Secretary Hanna Skandera with Paul Aguilar as her designee; and State Treasurer James Lewis whose designee is Sheila Duffy. Representing NEA-NM, I serve as Chair.

Last year the ERB was recognized for our willingness to step up, as requested, to present a plan design change to legislators to assure our fund's solvency. While that recommended change did not pass completely through the legislative process, the Board has continued our work during this calendar year to look at plan design features that might have the least impact on current and future members while reaching solvency of the fund in a 20 to 30 year period.

We also recognize that communicating our work to our members is a priority in having support for any change recommended. Our approximately 130,000 retired, active and inactive members of the education community expect and deserve transparency in the Board entrusted to protect and preserve their retirement fund.

Our goal is to use factual and sound information in looking at potential plan design changes that will increase the solvency for the fund over the shortest period of time possible, while providing minimum disruption to the benefits of the maximum number of our members – retired and current employees who have worked hard and planned for an adequate and deserved retirement.

Retired members were anxious in 2010 about the negative impact of the CPI on the COLA when ERB worked with the Legislature to pass legislation to prevent a decrease in benefits. In 2011, however, retirees are seeing a decrease in benefits due to an increase in dental insurance rates.

At the same time we also are cognizant that our active members are in a multi-year stagnant period

of little or no significant salary increase as well as an increase in retirement contributions due to the shift from employer to employee.

On other important issues, please visit the NM ERB website at www.nmerb.org for updated informational articles such as NM's Investment Funds Wisely Diversified (9-7-11); Portfolio Exhibits Strong Growth (8-15-11); and Individuals Claiming to Represent NM Educational Board (8-10-11).

Again, we are committed to a working partnership with our members and the legislature to improve ERB's solvency and insure benefits of all members are secure. As your representative, I am committed to making the best decisions for all retired, active and future members.

Thank you for your support,

Call for Nominations to NEA-New Mexico Retired Elective Office

The NEA-New Mexico Elections Committee calls for nominations for offices to be elected in the 2012 All-Member Election. All nominations close at close of business on Wednesday, October 20, 2011. Nominations are open for the following offices:

NEA-New Mexico Board of Directors: representing Retired Members, one year term beginning July 15, 2012 (only retired members eligible to nominate and be nominated)

NEA-New Mexico EdPAC: representing Retired Members, three-year term beginning July 15, 2012 (only retired members eligible to nominate and be nominated)

2012 NEA Representative Assembly Delegate: Retired delegate to the 2012 NEA Representative Assembly (only retired members eligible to nominate and be nominated)

Article for NEA-NM regarding New Mexico Retiree Health Care Authority

By Tom Sullivan, NMRHCA Vice Chair

As we are all painfully aware, public sector pension funds around the country, like our own ERB, have been struggling with long term solvency issues. Thus we have seen changes for new hires setting longer age and years of service requirements while such funds are also exploring additional options for the near future like increased minimum retirement ages; number of years in the Final Average Salary calculation; Cost of Living Adjustments etc. Not surprisingly, similar kinds of discussions are occurring with Other Post-employment Benefit sectors (OPEB's) like N.M.'s Retiree Health Care Authority to insure that that system, too, will be viable for future generations of beneficiaries.

Over the last several years NMRHCA's Board has made a number of changes to shore up the program- collapsing former overly expensive plan options; changing co-pays and out of pocket maximums; and, yes, annually increasing retirees monthly/annual premiums for all coverages. And the active employees and their employers, with legislative approval, also agreed to phase in payroll percent increases as well.

Yet even with these recent changes, coupled with numbingly regular 8% premium increases for those retirees on their fixed incomes, the fund is still only projecting solvency for 15 years! So, even though there will be no additional changes in benefits for 2012, the Board will be carefully evaluating every aspect of the current program to develop a new 5 year master plan for ongoing solvency during the next year. That analysis and discussion will include subsidy levels for spouses and dependents, the number of years of service one would need to receive full subsidies, minimum age requirements, plan design changes- including co-pays and out of pocket charges- the whole gamut- while still likely facing inexorable annual premium increases as we follow that national 8% trendline.

And finally somewhere out in the not too distant future, we also believe we will have to turn again to the legislature and our active employees and employers to earn their support for another round of payroll contribution increases as we know solvency can't be accomplished solely on the backs of our retirees through future premium increases.

While I truly wish I could provide you with a rosier forecast, I believe these are honest assessments of the RHCA's status for the near future. As we have often heard, getting old isn't for wimps!

Wealth of Experience

By Rebecca Bright



When Angie Lucero arrives at Tomasita Elementary each Monday, two once-shy first graders greet her, eager to share details about the past week's activities, read together, and get help writing in their journals. Lucero, a retired teacher with 36 years of experience, is a stable source of one-on-one attention for these girls, in a school struggling to provide everything its students need.

Lucero tutors once a week at Tomasita, a small K-5 school in eastern Albuquerque, New Mexico, that faces significant challenges in raising student achievement. A majority of the students at Tomasita - 78 percent - qualifies for free or reduced-price lunch and a quarter of the students are English language learners. "Extra help in the classroom is especially important now with all of the budget cuts," notes Lucero. "There are more kids in classrooms now, and they need so much individual help."

Lucero volunteers through Oasis, an organization that provides classes, health programs, and volunteer opportunities for adults over 50. She is trained to provide struggling first-graders specialized literacy instruction, but she often provides emotional support, as well. "Sometimes we just talk. I'm bilingual, and I go in and talk with some of the kids in Spanish and English, sometimes just about what's going on at home," she says. "When I used to teach, I saw that just having someone to talk to was important."

Lucero is one of many retired teachers who have chosen to return to a high-needs classroom, using her experience and passion to help students succeed in academics and beyond. Around the country, union-led collaborations are engaging both retired and current educators and are partnering with parents, communities, and business to positively transform struggling schools as part of NEA's Priority Schools Campaign. Whether providing extra one-on-one attention for a student or mentoring a new teacher in a priority school, retired teachers are an essential element of these partnerships.



The 2011 NEA-RA By Carol Teweleit

The atmosphere is electric; the music reverberates throughout the hall, the crowds of enthusiastic men and women are on their feet, clapping, bouncing, swaying, and some even dancing to the music. What are these people so excited about? It's the opening day of the NEA RA!

This year's Representative Assembly was in Chicago, the "windy city." I am told the "wind" is not really the wind like we have in New Mexico; instead the nickname came from the numerous politicians who inhabit the city.

Thank you so much for electing me to represent you. I began my adventure at the NEA-Retired Annual Meeting, held July 27-29, prior to the RA. Because of a change in schedule after I had made plane and hotel reservations, I did not arrive until the evening of the 27th. But I was able to participate in a number of activities. That evening was a reception that all of the NEA officers attended and we had a chance to visit old friends and meet new ones. On the next day over 400 NEA student and retired members boarded buses for "Outreach to Teach." We descended upon a previously selected school and began the beautification process. A flurry of activity could be seen in the halls with sanding and refinishing paneling, mural painting, and decorating bulletin boards. Outside, groups were spreading new wood chips in the playground, planting flowers in the front and making new planters in back for the outdoor garden. Workers were everywhere!

Although the retired members headed back in the afternoon, the students finished the job. Although tired, an intergenerational dance of student and retired members that evening was fun for all. That was when the students began teaching the "retired folk" the "Flash Mob" that would be done at the RA by all the delegates (and Dennis Van Roekel did not know about it until it happened.) The next day was a business meeting and elections of officers to fill the retired slate of officers and board members.

The theme for the RA was "Standing Strong: For Our Schools, Our Students and America." With the lively debate and discussions we were able to complete a lot of business. One example was the passing of a policy statement that sets a clear course for overhauling teacher evaluation and accountability systems in order to improve professional practice and student learning.

Some other highlights were: Vice President Biden spoke to the assembly; the delegates voted to recommend President Obama in the 2012 election; we got to hear a new NEA theme song,

"Stand Up Strong." (To hear it and/or download it, go to nea.org. It's right there on the home page.) The delegates also showed their support for the teachers around the nation who are losing payroll deduction and bargaining rights. A lot of discussion was about the attack on public schools, teachers, and the middle class itself and what we can do to defend what we know is good for the country. We indeed do need to "Stand Strong."

Thank you again for the opportunity to represent you and participate in both the Retired Annual Meeting and the Representative Assembly. It was amazing!

NEA Retired visits Tamaya in Bernalillo

"Now More Than Ever, The Commitment Continues" This is what was written across our program folders. This was the theme of the 2011 NEA-Retired Western Regional Conference Agenda. Saturday, April 9, 2011 through Monday, April 11, 2011, our NM delegates heard the pleas of several speakers to make a difference and volunteer our time and energy to help Public Education.

Sharon Morgan, our state president welcomed our visitors from Hawaii to Washington. NEA-Big presented ideas and programs on Social Networking, Politics, Family-School-Community Collaboration, Mentor Connections, and Merging with other Organizations. However, the retired teacher from Wisconsin brought us to tears as he read the letter he wrote to the Governor of Wisconsin.

"As educators, you know what students need to succeed in the 21st century. Your voice is critical..." Join us November 4, 2011 at the Sheraton Albuquerque Uptown with your ideas.

P.S. I would also like you to send a one page synopsis of how you help in your community to:

Angie Lucero
11404 Angelina PI NE
Albuquerque, NM 87123

I will be putting together a notebook of Who's Who in New Mexico and put these in our newsletters.



1886
to
2011



The Fight Goes On: A Look Back at Our Accomplishments...

Retirement:

1925 • The Governor and the Legislature of New Mexico passed landmark legislation establishing the first pension plan of any kind for public servants.

1945 • In New Mexico, all educational agencies are brought together under one retirement act.

1957 • The New Mexico Legislature passes the Educational Retirement Act.

Collective Bargaining:

1966 • New Mexico State School Board passes a resolution that encourages school districts to enter into collective bargaining with their employees and better pay for teachers.

1991 • Teacher due process was restored

1992 • Public Employee Bargaining Act (P.E.B.A.) was passed and signed into law.

2003 • Public Employees Collective Bargaining Act is signed, giving public employees back their right to bargain after losing those rights in 1999.

2011 • Since the restoration of Collective Bargaining rights new locals achieve bargaining rights each year. A vast majority of NEA-NM members are covered by CBA's.

Employee Rights:

Mid 1940's • NEA-NM successfully lobbied for passage of a teacher tenure law to provide statutory due process protection for teacher employment rights.

1963 • Congress passes the Equal Pay Act, making it illegal for employers to pay women less than what a man would receive for the same job.

1974 • NEA wins a major case in the U.S. Supreme Court, striking down mandatory maternity leave for pregnant teachers.

1978 • The Pregnancy Discrimination Act bans employment discrimination against pregnant women.

1986 • New Mexico Legislature repealed teacher tenure and replaced it with legislation which allowed school districts to terminate teachers for almost any conceivable reason. NEA-NM was the only education organization to oppose this legislation.

1994 • New Mexico became the first state to extend equally strong statutory job protection rights to both teachers and support personnel. Former NEA-NM President Rep. Ima Lee Wells carried the legislation.

Quality Teachers:

1903 • Two normal schools in Las Vegas and Silver City were successfully lobbied through the legislature.

2002-06 • NEA-NM lobbied for positive change for New Mexico. During this time period teacher salary rankings moved from 46th in 2002 to 29th for 2006-07.

2003 • The New Mexico Legislature passed the Education Reform Act. The three-tiered licensure system was introduced to enhance the profession of teaching.



Upcoming NEA-NM Retired Elections

Are you interested in becoming more involved in NEA-NM Retired? Do you have concerns that you don't think are being met? If so, you might be interested in becoming an officer, board member or state delegate for NEA-NM Retired. We have 3 officers and 5 board members who serve 2 year terms. We also have 10 voting delegates at the NEA-NM council meeting who serve 2 year terms. Please fill out and return the following form if you are interested in serving and return by January 15, 2012 to:

**Brian Huebner
NEA-NM
4223 Montgomery Blvd NE
Albuquerque, NM 87109**

My name is (please print)_____. I am a member of NEA-NM Retired and I am interested in representing NEA-NM Retired members in the following capacity:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> President | <input type="checkbox"/> Northwest Region Director |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Vice-President | <input type="checkbox"/> Northeast/NC Region Director |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Secretary/Treasurer | <input type="checkbox"/> Central Region Director |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Council Delegate | <input type="checkbox"/> Southwest Region Director |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Southeast Region Director |

Name_____

Address_____

City/State/Zip Code_____

Candidate Statement (25 words or less)



**Now More Than Ever,
The Commitment Continues**



2011-2012 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

National Education Association - New Mexico



Ms. Mr. Mrs. Dr.

Name (PRINT: Last, First, Middle Initial)	Date of Birth	Social Security Number
Mailing Address	Mailing City/State	
Home Email	Home Phone (w/Area Code)	Cell Phone (w/Area Code)
Local Association	School/ Worksite	School/Work Phone

Description and NEA, NEA-NM, NEA-NM Region & *EdPAC Dues				Row Total
<input type="checkbox"/> Certified Full Time (AC-1-100): **\$528.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Certified Part Time (AC-1-50): **\$279.00	<input type="checkbox"/> ESP (Classified) Full Time (AC-2-100): ***\$283.50	<input type="checkbox"/> ESP (Classified) Part Time (AC-2-50): ***\$156.50	\$
NEA-NM Local Dues				
Varies from local to local				\$
SUBTOTAL (Column):				\$
Position Code (check one)	Ethnicity Code (check one)	Method of Payment (check one)	Additional Dues and Contribution Opportunities (optional)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Classroom Teacher (See Below) <input type="checkbox"/> A level I Teacher <input type="checkbox"/> Tchrr/Instruct/Program Asst <input type="checkbox"/> Counselor <input type="checkbox"/> Secy/Clerk/Admin Services <input type="checkbox"/> Bldgs/Grnds Maint/Repair/Other <input type="checkbox"/> Librarian/Media Specialist <input type="checkbox"/> Food Service <input type="checkbox"/> Administrator <input type="checkbox"/> Trans/Dlvry/Vhel Mechanics <input type="checkbox"/> Instructional Facilitator <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	<input type="checkbox"/> American Indian/Alaska Native <input type="checkbox"/> Asian <input type="checkbox"/> Black <input type="checkbox"/> Caucasian (not Hispanic Origin) <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Multi-Ethnic <input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown (This information is helpful in determining the diversity of our membership.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Payroll Deduction <input type="checkbox"/> Payment Attached (Check, Money Order, or Cash) <input type="checkbox"/> Electronic Funds Transfer from My Bank Account (EFT Form from Region Office) <input type="checkbox"/> MasterCard / Visa Acct. No. _____ Expiration Date: ____/____/____	<input type="checkbox"/> *EdPAC Contribution (Additional) \$ _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Minority Caucus (\$10.00 Minority; \$5.00 Non-minority) \$ _____ <input type="checkbox"/> ESP Caucus (\$10.00 ESP; \$5.00 Non-ESP) \$ _____ SUBTOTAL: \$ _____ GRAND TOTAL: (All Categories Above) \$ _____ Cost / Pay Period: (Optional) \$ _____	\$ _____ \$ _____ \$ _____ \$ _____ \$ _____

I hereby agree to pay cash for, authorize my employer to deduct from my salary in accordance with the agreed upon payroll deduction procedure, authorize the Educational Retirement Board to deduct from my monthly retirement checks, or authorize EFT deductions for my membership dues as revised annually and political action contributions in the amounts indicated for the current membership year and each membership year thereafter, provided that I may revoke this authorization as of September 1 of any calendar year by giving written notice to that effect to the local association on or before October 6 of that year. If for any reason, excepting death, my employment is terminated, amounts still owing under this authorization shall be deducted from final pay due.

*The NEA-New Mexico Education Political Action Committee (EdPAC) collects voluntary contributions from Association members and uses those contributions for political purposes, including, but not limited to, making contributions to and expenditures on behalf of friends of education who are candidates for elected office. Contributions to EdPAC are voluntary; making a contribution is neither a condition of employment nor membership in the Association, and members have the right to refuse to contribute without suffering any reprisal.

Although EdPAC requests an annual contribution of \$6.00 (or \$3.00 from ESP members), this is only a suggestion. A member may contribute more or less than the suggested amount, or may contribute nothing at all, without it affecting his or her membership status, rights, or benefits in NEA, NEA-NM, or any of their affiliates. I understand that dues payments (or a portion) may be deductible as a miscellaneous itemized deduction, though dues payments and contributions to EdPAC are not deductible as charitable contributions for federal income tax purposes.

**Six dollars (\$6.00) of the amount in this box, although collected in the same manner as dues, is a voluntary contribution to EdPAC. This voluntary contribution may be refunded to members who request it according to procedures contained in the NEA-NM bylaws. Forms for requesting the refund are available on www.nea-nm.org and are published twice annually in The Advocate's Voice.

***Three dollars (\$3.00) of the amount in this box, although collected in the same manner as dues, is a voluntary contribution to EdPAC. This voluntary contribution may be refunded to members who request it according to procedures contained in the NEA-NM Bylaws. Forms for requesting this refund are available on www.nea-nm.org and are published twice annually in The Advocate's Voice.

Member's Signature _____ Date ____/____/____ Recruiter (print) _____

Please make 3 photocopies; original to NEA-NM and one copy each to local association, payroll office (if applicable), and member.
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OFFICE USE ONLY	Date Entered: _____	Entered By: _____
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WANTED: A FEW ACTIVE RECRUITERS

NEA-New Mexico is developing members to participate on Regional Organizing and Action Recruitment teams throughout New Mexico. In-depth training, expenses and a \$25 per new member enrolled "thank you" will be provided. Minimum one year commitment sought. If interested, please contact Charles at cgoodmacher@nea.org (505) 450-3155 or Brian at bhuebner@nea.org (505) 259-0640.

...when you need to know!

www.nea-nm.org

Where to go...

NEA-NM remains steadfast in its fight for our public schools, our members, and the students they serve- just as it has for 125 years.



November 4, NEA-Retired Meeting, Sheraton Uptown
Hall of Fame that evening, Sheraton Uptown
November 5, Annual Delegate Council, Sheraton Uptown
January 18, Legislative Training and Reception, Santa Fe

NEA-NM Family Album to Celebrate Our 125 Years! Established as the Territorial Education Association way before New Mexico was a state, NEA-NM proudly enters its 125th birthday year this fall. In preparation, we've been going through our baby books, slide collections, photo envelopes, and albums to create a coffee table photography book showing who we are, where we've been, and what we stand for as the oldest school employee organization in New Mexico.

**Prices Single, \$20 each;
More than 10, \$15.00 each;
25, or more \$12.00 each;**

Please visit our website to print the Order Form and place your order!

**Order A Piece of
Your History Today**

Calendar



NEA-New Mexico

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www.nea-nm.org

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