

ECRTA

Elkhart County Retired Teachers Association

ECRTA Newsletter, August 2023 website: www.ecrta.com

From Your President: Barb Hrnewycz

I'm so excited to be moving into this role as President of Elkhart County Retired Teachers. It was a role I had not expected to be in, but just like in the classroom, when presented with the unexpected, you embrace the opportunity and do it to the best of your ability. I've learned so much already watching Carol run our meetings and luncheons. I'm sure that master class Questioning Makes a Difference, will come in handy as I will be asking lots of questions as we move forward.



Representative Assembly was held in June. It was more than a business meeting; it was a chance to connect with others who still want to make a difference, especially for the retired teachers of Indiana.

ECRTA donated a basket for the IRTA Foundation Silent Auction. We included items from around the county: Olympia turtles, Kercher Apple Butter, Essenhous noodles, Wakarusa Jumbo Jelly Beans, Elkhart County Fair mug, Soapy Gnome soap honoring Kercher's 100th anniversary, pure maple syrup from New Paris and gourmet popcorn from Shirley's in Goshen. It received a full bid on the suggested retail price. Thank you to all who contributed. The foundation appreciated the donation as well.

Why are you a part of ECRTA? What made you want to join and keep coming? What would you say to former colleagues to make them to start coming? One of my goals is to build our membership, but not just to say we have more members but to expand our influence in our community. We may be retired, but we're not "out to pasture". Our volunteer hours show we're involved, interested and willing to participate in our community. What can we do at our luncheons to nurture that interest? Send me your ideas. And invite your friends to come.

Our local organization is in need of several members to be part of the leadership team. We have so much fun at our board meetings, that I actually look forward to "*another*" meeting. We meet 4 times a year, the month before our luncheons, to plan. Most positions are a 2-year commitment. The two we need to fill as soon as possible are Vice President and Necrology. Please consider this your invitation to join the team.

Looking forward to seeing you at our September 14 luncheon at the First Church of Goshen on 5th street. (Formerly the First United Methodist Church). Barry Conrad, past president of IRTA will be our guest speaker. November luncheon will be at First Presbyterian Church with a local swing choir as our program.



ECRTA Meetings:

September 14, 2023—First Church of Goshen
Offering to First Light Mission Speaker Barry Conrad, IRTA

November 9, 2023—First Presbyterian Church
Performance by Fairfield Fusion

April 11, 2024

June 13, 2024

Officers & Committee Chairpersons

President: Barb Hrynewycz
President Elect/Programs: **need a volunteer**
Recording Secretary: Marilee Keim
Corresponding Secretary: Pat Huber
Treasurer: Karen Tobias
Past President: Carol Grieser
Public Relations: Dawn Wysong
Legislative: Gary Stoltz

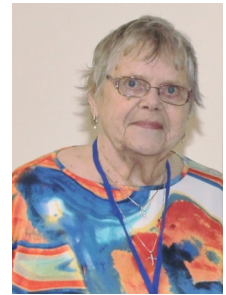
IRTA Foundation: Gary Stoltz
Retirement: **need a volunteer**
Community Services: Bonnie Reagan
Volunteer Hours: Lenette Burckhart
Membership: Marie Palacios
Scholarship: Carol Larson
Necrology: **need a volunteer**
Web Site: Ron Geyer

The 2022-23 ECRTA Scholarship Recipient by Carol Larson

Check with your friends, neighbors, church friends! We are looking for an Education Major. We did not have an application last year. All you need to know is available on the ECRTA website at www.ecrta.com/scholarship.

This scholarship is for \$1,000 and the requirements for eligibility are listed there. Do you know someone we can help? We want to give away \$1,000!

If more information is needed, please contact the Scholarship Chairman, Carol Larson 574-536-5154.



Legislative News by Gary Stoltz

The Indiana General Assembly started their "long session" on January 2, 2023 and ended it in the early morning hours of April 28, 2023 by passing a \$44.6B two year budget for the state of Indiana that Gov. Holcomb immediately signed into law. Sadly, this final version did not contain either a COLA or a "13th check" enhancement for retired educators for the next two years. My records indicate that this result has only happened once before since at least 1985. On a positive note, the inclusion in the budget dedicating nearly \$3B to pay down the unfunded liability in the Pre96 Teachers Retirement Fund is significant. Thank you to members who contacted their representative or Senator to support the IRTA Legislative Committee. IRTA will continue to pursue a pension enhancement in the next session.



Indiana Retired Teachers Association Foundation (IRTAF) News by Gary Stoltz

The IRTAF supports teachers who are currently teaching in our public schools. If you know a teacher who would like to do a special project in their classroom, but lacks funds for it, IRTAF can help. Applications are due by September 30, 2023 and can be found at www.retiredteachers.org or contact me for assistance. In the same way IRTAF can help college students majoring in education. Information and applications are available at the same website and are due in May.

2023 Elkhart County Retirees

<p><u>Baugo</u></p> <p><u>Concord</u> Nancy Bontreger Joseph Bowen Joann Camarillo Jeff Long Joni Long Craig Shafer</p> <p><u>Elkhart</u> Warren Seegers</p> <p><u>Fairfield</u> Lori Salciunas</p>	<p><u>Goshen</u> Gary Arndt Heather R. Bontrager Jill Hackleman Dawn Hicks Melody Knudson Lori Line Kaylene Miller Laura Pettifor Kelly Kissinger Robina Sommers</p> <p><u>Westview</u> Missy Pixley</p>	<p>These are the official retirees from the list given to us by the State of Indiana. There may be more retirees to add to the list in the future.</p> <p>Please invite retired teachers you know to our gathering on September 14 to hear IRTA former President, Barry Conrad.</p>
---	---	---

ECRTA Membership News by Marie Palacios for 2023-24

For the 2022-2023 year, ECRTA has had 210 members. Just to remind you, your current membership is for the school year and not the calendar year. This means your membership will expire August 2023. You will receive a membership card with the Newsletter. Please complete and return the top portion to the address listed with \$15 dues payment for the school year 2023-2024. It is important to renew your membership each year because each member is a vital part of our association. Ten dollars of your dues are used for organization expenses and five dollars goes to the ECRTA scholarship fund. (We also welcome extra money for the scholarship fund.) Every year we give a \$1,000 scholarship to a junior or senior in an Indiana college with an education major. We appreciate your support each year.



On the membership card: update your address, phone number and email address. There is a line for you to indicate if you wish to receive information by email or U.S. Mail. Receiving notices by email reduces the cost of postage for the ECRTA. We will continue to send postcard notices to those who request U.S. mail. We look forward to having all of you as ECRTA members. Please encourage all your teacher friends to join and encourage all new retirees to join as well. Looking forward to seeing you at the September gathering.

2022 Volunteer Hours by Lenette Burckhart

A huge thank you for the 9,556 volunteer hours recorded by 37 members in 2022 and a thank you even for the volunteer hours not reported—an appreciation for generously giving your time to others. Each hour represents \$31.80, a sum donated to the State of Indiana. That gives us a total of \$303,880.80 for 2022. It's really important to keep track of your volunteer hours, and to report them to the volunteer coordinator at the end of the year. The IRTA lobbying team uses these hours when it approaches the legislature representing retired teachers to show how retired teachers give back to the community and state.



Thank you volunteers!

Necrology Report June 1, 2022 – May 31, 2023 by Marie Polacios



Ronald James Bacon	Miriam Hochstetler	Kevin E. Ong
Mary Louise Bontrager	Merle Ross Holden	Irvin Pratt
Ina Ruth Breckbill	Ann Hoover	(Morris) Wayne Randolph
Carol Lee Darr	Shirley Hosopple	Deinnis Risser
Alice R. Dentler	Elizabeth Jacobs	Garvin Edward Roberson
Jackie Dougherty	Susan A. (Kridler) Johnson	Robert W.. Rumsey
Keith Dougherty	Ann Kalman	Phillip Self
Judy Eash	Dale E. Kelly	Esther May Shallenbarger
Jerry A. Fawley	Larry D. Kiefer	Betty Sherck
Marjorie Finney	Catherine M. Kuhmichel	Ida Mae Sherck
Dennis Ray Foster	Lois Lambright	Grace Smith
Thelma C. Gibson	Mary Alice Lapp	Jane Snider
Sharon A. Gongwer	Lydia Ann Lenaway	Michelle R. Strati
Diana M. Hite	Rita Lyzen	Nancy Tooker
	Albert McDowell	Kathy Lynn Van Elk
	Peter McFarland	Fred Webb
	Arlene Ruth Mark	Floyd Welling
	Carol Lee Miller	
	Conrad Neff	

CAPS by Carol Grieser

At our April meeting, we learned about the work of Child and Parent Services (CAPS) of Elkhart County. CAPS is a nonprofit agency whose mission is to prevent child abuse by valuing children and strengthening families in Elkhart County.

CAPS has been part of my DNA since it was founded in the 1970's by Daryl Abbott. He asked me to be on the organizational committee. We met in the basement of Samuel Strong School where I was a first grade teacher. As the years passed, it has grown and added five programs: CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate), Healthy Families/Parent Aide, Community Education, Supervised Visitation, and Family Advocacy Center.

As a kindergarten teacher at Bristol School, several students came from CAPS. It was special to be able to teach them and see the influence CAPS had on their lives.

Volunteers are always welcome! Contact information: 574-295-2277
CAPS is located at 1000 W. Hively Avenue, Elkhart, Indiana 46517
Money collected at our April ECRTA meeting was contributed to CAPS.

Other contributions: Sept. 2022 The Window, Nov. 2022 Red Cross Hurricane Relief, June 2023 Church Community Services

