

THE DESKTOP

The Newsletter for the Portage County Retired Teachers' Association



Volume 25 Issue 2 April-May 2016 PCRTA- 50 years in Sept.2016



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Barbara Petroski To Speak at PCRTA Meeting on May 19

Petroski, a life resident of Portage County and currently the Executive Secretary and Treasurer of Portage County Historical Society, will join us on May 19th. Barbara volunteers as the librarian and genealogy researcher for the Portage County Historical Society. She is involved with the preservation of books, papers and photographs.

Barbara is a past president of the Portage County Chapter of the Ohio Genealogical Society and has been a member for over 20 years. She is, and continues to be the editor of the chapter newsletters.

Please join us as we greet Barbara and learn more about the educational heritage of Portage County Schools.



Barb Petroski

PCRTA Member, John Gwinn, Wins Environmental Award from Portage Park District Foundation

John will be recognized at PPDF annual Environmental Conservation Awards Benefits Dinner on April 30th at the American Legion Hall in Kent. Should other PCRTA members wish to attend the dinner, which includes a reception, silent auction and raffles, please call Jane Preston Rose (330-678-9127) to make a reservation. The social time begins at 5:30 p.m. with dinner at 7:00 p.m. followed by the program. Tickets are \$35 each.

Each year, the Foundation honors members and organizations in the community who have made significant contributions towards making Portage County a healthy, environmentally friendly place to live and work. 2016 is the 18th year of such awards, so John joins a group of exceptional people and organizations who have significantly contributed to protecting and preserving our environment for generations to come.

There are several categories of awards (*e.g.*, Environmental Education; Green Business; Green Building/Development; Environmental Activism; and Stewardship). John is being recognized in the Environmental Stewardship category for the work he has done, both individually and with others, to improve our environment. He is a role model for others.

PCRTA Luncheon Meeting March 17, 2016

President Helena Parry thanked greeters Phyllis Spangler and Anita Foote. She announced that Dave Gynn is the new Eastern Area Vice President of ORTA.

Len Suzelis led us in singing “Irish Eyes Are Smiling” and “My Country ‘Tis of Thee.”

President Helena Parry welcomed ORTA President Carol Remington, who spoke about a federal level bill which has been proposed to deal with the WEP (Windfall Elimination Policy). Hearings are now being held. She feels there is a good chance the formula will be reset. She will keep us informed. She said ORTA is working hard to keep members informed. The ORTA Website has lots of information. She also said that our Webmaster is doing a good job. She encouraged members to attend the Alliance Spring Conference as there will be an update on health insurance.

Community Chair Judy Morgan reported that our project for May is Big Brothers Big Sisters—gift cards or donations. She urged everyone to report volunteer hours since our goal for 2016 is 50,000 hours as it is the 50th anniversary of PCRTA.

The next social event is April 14 at the Field Restaurant in Brimfield: bingo and lunch 10:00 AM.

Jean Nolte read an inspiring poem “Plant Your Spring Garden” for the meditation.

Following lunch, Judy Hendershot and Connie Evans did a memorial service In Memory of Our Beloved Friends. Connie did a power point presentation complete with a musical background. Judy had purchased the book *Reflection on Life* to give to the families. Those remembered were: Patricia Balazs, David Mohan, Shirley Taylor, Merrilou Ritz Johnson, Marilyn Alger, Chloe Ann Small and Robert Stanton.

Ron Snowberger won the 50/50 basket, and Mary Ann Brockett won \$70.00, which she donated to the PCRTA.

Diana Zuranski, along with Scott Craven, the construction manager, gave a very informative program on Habitat for Humanity

LEGISLATIVE by Dan McCombs

STRS was active on the legislative scene when the Ohio Government Relations staff attended the National Council on Teacher Retirement conference in Washington. The purpose was to use this opportunity to meet with staff members from several of the Ohio congressional delegation offices. The focus of the Hill visits was to voice STRS Ohio's concerns regarding Sen. Orrin Hatch's (R-NV) Secure Annuities for Employees (SAFE) Retirement Act and the Public Employee Transparency Act (PEPTA), sponsored in the past by Congressman Devin Nunes (R-CA). As I informed you earlier provisions from both the SAFE Act and PEPTA were included as part of the relief package for Puerto Rico. That bill did not move, but STRS states that Congress may be considering legislation this spring to once again aide Puerto Rico. In addition, Rep. Nunes is expected to reintroduce PEPTA. STRS is requesting that no Ohio delegation members co-sponsor this legislation, as they did not in past sessions. As ORTA also agrees, STRS Ohio shared the system's opposition to mandatory Social Security coverage. This issue does not appear to be on anyone's agenda currently, but we need to remain vigilant. We probably won't see a lot of legislative action until after the election this fall. It has been very interesting to follow the Supreme Court cases with the current void created by the death of Justice Scalia, the leading conservative member of the Supreme Court. Hang on to your hats as this promises to be an exciting election.

PCRTA /ORTA and HABITAT for HUMANITY by Ron Snowberger



Carol Remington Diana Zuranski Scott Craven

Those of you who were unable to attend the March luncheon missed a super good program. Diana Zuranski, program manager, and Scott Craven, engineer for Portage County Habitat, presented a power point program and explanation of just what Habitat is, how it functions, what it does, its mission and all the details for providing “a hand up” for local families in need.

As you may remember, in January 2016 ORTA joined forces with Habitat, with all retired teacher organizations participating. This venture not only lends

helping hands to Habitat, but also provides an avenue for PCRTA volunteers to help give a local family “a hand up” as well help us reach the PCRTA goal of 50,000 volunteer hours in 2016. One purpose of this collaboration is to raise the visibility of ORTA as well as our local chapter, both for attracting new members and for providing a united front to ensure our retirement benefits by keeping the powers that be in Columbus aware of the many contributions and volunteer hours retired teachers give to their communities.

Saturday, April 30, through Sunday, May 8, is WOMEN BUILD WEEK. So on **MAY 3**, Habitat will be joined by several PCRTA women (men are welcome also) along with Carol Remington, ORTA President to help restore a small home on Lincoln Street in Ravenna. WOULD YOU BE WILLING TO HELP? PLEASE SAY YES! For more details you can contact Diana Zuranski at 330-296-2880 or Ron Snowberger at 330-678-3268.

Please visit the PCRTA web site to explore the many ways you can give (from time, to donations, to gifts, to expertise) to Habitat for Humanity. So many community members have no idea what PCRTA is or does.....help us to change that.....awareness and communication with PCRTA will benefit everyone.

PLAY BINGO by Dave Gynn



Join PCRTA members and friends to play BINGO on Thursday, April 14, at the Field Restaurant meeting room, 4112 Brimfield Plaza, Kent. Play bingo at 10:00 and stay for lunch. Watch the Record Courier for discount coupons. Bring a white elephant for someone else to win. A white elephant is not a gag gift. It is something of value that you no longer need. You can get to the Plaza off E. Tallmadge Rd. or Kelso Rd. off Rt. 43.

PCRTA Executive Committee Meeting March 10, 2016



Carole Stokes

President Helena Parry called the 501(c)3 meeting to order.

501c3 Scholarship Treasury Report January 1 – February 29, 2016

Prepared by Assistant Treasurer Darlene Fetterhoff, given by Dave Gynn

Checking Account Balance	\$8,544.14
Savings Account Balance	\$11,897.11
Stifel Balance	\$46,408.17

NOTE: See the website for the full report.

Scholarship Chair, Jim Montaquila reported that in January scholarship applications were sent to all of the schools. On March 9 he sent reminders to get the applications in. Public Relations Chair Georgia Darrah sent an article about the scholarships to the Record Courier and that all applications are due by April 1, 2016.

President Helena Parry adjourned the 501c3 meeting and called the 501(c)4.

Past President Ron Snowberger gave a report from ORTA. ORTA's goal is to increase membership by 2,000 new members. Our chapter needs 27 new members for our share. He suggested we consider small grants to current teachers as some groups are already doing. This publicity might help us get new members. He mentioned that the Portage County chapter is respected at meetings in Columbus.

President Helena Parry asked if there were any additions or corrections to the previous minutes. Kay Wise made a motion to accept the minutes. It was seconded by Pat Farley. The motion passed.

Treasurer Dave Gynn gave the PCRTA Treasury Report for January 1 – February 29, 2016.

Checking Balance	\$5,591.70
Savings Balance	\$755.14
Stifel Balance	\$27,072.98

NOTE: See the website for the full report.

Dave also reported that 29 members have not renewed their membership for 2016. He has been trying to contact all of them. There is an incentive program whereby PCRTA receives a \$3.00 rebate for each new member. This ends in June.

Dave is the new Vice President for the eastern region of ORTA.

Vice President Georgia Darrah reported that all of the programs for 2016 have been planned, and a copy is listed on our website. A news release was sent to the Record Courier and was published about our upcoming March luncheon. Our March luncheon speaker is Diana Zuranski who will be speaking to us about Habitat for Humanity. This year PCRTA and ORTA are joining hands with Habitat to be of assistance to them.

PCRTA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES continued

ORTA Trustee Helena Parry reported that ORTA needs to update the email addresses of members. Judy Hendershot volunteered to call people to update the email addresses.

Dave Gynn said that Pat will organize the 50th anniversary book by years. If anyone has any information to contribute, please contact Pat Gynn.

NEOMED Proctor Scheduling Chair Edith Scott donated to PCRTA the bell she received when she became a life member of ORTA.

PCRTA's Community Service Project for March is cleaning supplies for the County Clothing Center. The project for May is gift cards or donations for Big Brothers Big Sisters of Portage County.

Legislative Chair Dan McCombs passed along information from STRS Ohio Legislative News. Michael J. Nehf, Executive Director of STRS, sent a letter to Senate Majority Leader, Mitch McConnell, protesting provisions that could affect pensions. Dan also reported that Carol Kinsey wrote that our pension system and health care are among ORTA top Legislative priorities. STRS is looking very seriously at what needs to be done to maintain quality health care as long as they can. These decisions will be made internally.

Membership Chair Judy Hendershot will send out letters to local associations on April 1. She purchased Reflections on Life gift books to give to family members at the memorial service. Her granddaughter made nameplates to put in them.

NEOMED Proctor Scheduling Chair Edith Scott stated that she will arrange another orientation when three or four people are interested.

Pre-Retirement Chair Richard Brockett delivered fliers to each County Superintendent on March 4. The Pre-Retirement Workshop will be on Tuesday, April 19, 2016, at Channels 45/49 at 5:00 – 7:00pm.

Protective Services Chair Kay Wise noted a correction for the AARP Smart Driver Program. The correct date is May 26, 2016. She stated that the 50th Anniversary Celebration May guests would be Ann Womer Benjamin, Kathleen Clyde, Kathleen Chandler, Vicki Kline, and, perhaps, Maureen Frederick. The Virginia Hamilton Conference is April 7 & 8, 2016.

Social/Travel Chair John Kerstetter passed out sheets with the planned events. On April 14, Thursday, 10:00: Bingo with lunch at the Field Restaurant in Brimfield Plaza. In May there will be a Portage County Museum Tour date TBA.

Webmaster Connie Evans has added 50th Anniversary to the top of the web page.

On **Tuesday APRIL 19, 2016**, PCRTA is sponsoring a **Pre-Retirement Workshop** from 5-7 p.m. at the 45/49 Building at 1750 Campus Drive off Rt. 261. This event is chaired by Richard and Mary Ann Brockett. If you could help at the check-in table or help serve refreshments, please call the Brocketts at 330-204-3151.



50th Anniversary Looking Back compiled by Dave Gynn

The history of Portage County schools reflects numerous consolidations. This information is a summary of materials found in Portage Heritage, published by our county historical society in 1957.

Atwater Township had ten sub-districts in the early 1800s: Douthitt, Station, Science Hill, Thompson Corners, Kump, Yale, Virginia Corners, Mowen, Center and Stroup. In 1905 four districts were centralized and in 1917 all districts joined the consolidation.

Aurora's first school was established in 1803 on the square. Eight districts were centralized in 1897: Route 82 and Bissell Rd, Route 306 near Crackel Road, Hudson Road and Old Mill Road, Route 43 and Eldridge Road, Old Harmon Road south of Mennonite Road, Town Line Road near old Kent Farm, Route 43 and 306, and Pioneer Trail and Crookis Road.

Brimfield opened its first school in 1818 in the home of Jeremiah Moulton. There was an academy in the 1840s and 50s. Districts were centralized in 1921. Brimfield claims the first junior high in the county in 1930.

Charlestown Township had a log school house at the Center in 1811. Six districts were centralized in 1915: Augerburg, Center District No. 2, Kirkland, Jimtown, Curtiss and Greenleaf.

Deerfield's first school was near the Center in 1803 where a select school was later located. A public supported high school was set up in 1895. Centralization of the old districts was in 1916: Deerfield Center, Hillside, Few Town, Helsel Town, Mott Town, Hickory Grove and Wilcox. In 1955 Deerfield joined Palmyra, Charlestown, Edinburg and Paris to form the Southeast Schools.

Edinburg started in 1818 in a log house. In 1823 the teacher agreed to teach for three months for 12 bushels of wheat per month and the remainder in some other trade, such as sheep, cattle, and whiskey.

Franklin Township schools began in 1815 and moved in 1817 to a joint school and church building near Crain Avenue. The five rural districts centralized in 1920: Twin Lakes near gravel pits, Breakneck off Horning Road, Brady Lake School (opened in 1884), Maple Grove on Hudson Road and Northeast of Pippin Lake.

Freedom School was taught in a small frame building at Drakesburg. There was an academy for a short time. Township schools were centralized in 1914, and a fine new modern school was built in 1917. Freedom became a part of the James A. Garfield school district.

Garrettsville schools were "select" and "private" located at North and Maple Streets and opposite Park Cemetery. The "Red Schoolhouse" was built in 1841. Nelson High School consolidated with Garrettsville in 1948 and Freedom in 1951 from the James A. Garfield district.

Hiram started in 1813 and in 1816 had two school districts: Center (called Stone Jug) and South. Various township districts were consolidated in 1903 with a building at Central.

Kent had three small schools between 1825 and 1867: Lake Street east of North Water, Stow Street opposite the cemetery and Hudson Road near Fairchild (unusual because it was two stories). A select school opened in 1856 in the Township Hall. The Union School System was established about 1860. In 1869 a small frame building on Franklin Avenue served the "flats."

Mantua-Crestwood started in 1806 on Mennonite Road. The Town Hall was built for a school in 1867. Mantua Center and township joined the village schools, as did Shalersville High School in a new district: The Mantua-Shalersville Local District or Crestwood.

50th Anniversary Looking Back compiled by Dave Gynn, continued

Nelson Township schools, started in 1816, had 12 sub-districts in 1853: Center, West, Northeast, North, Kennedy Ledges, Swamp, Newell Ledges and Pierce's Corners. The Nelson Academy began in 1851. New schools were built for \$500 and teachers were paid \$30 a month. Nelson districts were centralized in 1901, one of the county's first consolidations.

Palmyra had eight sub-districts: Grover, Lloyd, High Williams Bacon, Wales, Whippoorwill, Diamond, Center and Noel. They were centralized in 1917. Palmyra became part of the Southeast District in 1954.

Paris had two schools open in 1819 – a private school for the benefit of the children of "Uncle" Richard and public school in a log school house on the northwest corner of Lot 34. Locating the arsenal in the Paris District reduced the number of pupils, and the district became a part of the Southeast District in 1955.

Randolph had a small log school-house near the creek bridge. It was built in 1805 by the Bachelor's Club, comprised of six or seven young men. In 1812 a small frame school was built at the Center. All districts were centralized in 1905.

Ravenna City held school in the unfinished courthouse in 1810. In 1825 the Ravenna Academy was established at Cedar and Prospect. The Tappen Female Seminary opened in 1847 on North Clinton. A school for young men was founded in 1849. In 1859 South Chestnut Street school was built; West Main, in 1875; Highland Avenue, later.



*Dave Gynn, Chairman of
PCRTA 50th Anniversary*

Ravenna Township first held school in a log house near Ryedale farm in 1803. The township schools were: Bean, Babcock, Beechwood, Hinman, Price, Blackhorse, Red Brush and Campbellsport. They were centralized in 1915 and moved into a new building. This is now a part of Ravenna City Schools.

Rootstown schools started in a log building in 1807. The community built a building to be used as a school, church and town hall in 1815. In 1831 teachers made quill pens, boarded around and were paid \$18 a month. A centralization of ten Rootstown districts in 1916 was accommodated with one Center school.

Shalersville had a demand for a school in 1810 and opened at the Center. The Shalersville districts were: Center, Coe, Streater, Peck, Feeder Dam, Codey, Babcock, County Infirmary and No. 9. An Academy was built at the Center in 1851 and used until the schools were centralized in 1904. The school is now a part of the Crestwood District.

Streetsboro's first school opened in 1826 in the northwest corner of the township. A school opened in the Singletary house in 1830. In 1900 the districts were: Center, Cackler, Moran, Doolittle, Wise and Kennedy Road. The schools were centralized in 1905 and horse-drawn buses were used.

Suffield had a school of six pupils in 1807. There were eight districts: Logtown, Smokey, Row, Mishlers, Central, Porter, Five Corners, Cramers and Swartz. The districts were consolidated in 1923 with a new school building at the Center.

Windham started school in 1811 and a "stove" school was built in 1812. Helping in education was a Library Association in 1824. In 1834 an Educational Association was formed and an academy building was erected. The districts in 1900 were: Center Special, Aston Road, Adrian Sherman, El Bert, Stanley Parker, Stanley Road, Mahoning Corners and Tom Shank.



PCRTA LUNCHEON RESERVATION FORM

The May 19, 2016, PCRTA Luncheon will be at The Ravenna Elks Club 776 N. Freedom St., Ravenna, Ohio – Cost is \$14.00

On-site caterer, David Weidaw, and his staff will be preparing the luncheon of: Salisbury steak, vegetable lasagna, corn, mashed potatoes & gravy, salad, dessert, rolls and butter, water, coffee, tea & lemonade.

Number of buffet reservations _____

List names (for name tags) Please print and mark clearly. ** List your name and phone first.



I have enclosed \$ _____ (\$14.00 for each luncheon reservation).

I have enclosed \$ _____ for the scholarship fund. ** Please indicate if any names listed are new members or guests.

PLEASE MAIL YOUR RESERVATIONS by May 9, 2016. Mail your check made out to PCRTA and reservations to **NEW CONTACT and address for Luncheon Reservation is:**

Karen Balog: 516 E. Main St., Ravenna, Ohio 44266 balogcpa@toast.net 330-296-8467

COMMUNITY SERVICE for May is to bring gift cards or cash for Big Brothers and Sisters.

SOCIAL/TRAVEL



John & Sandy Kerstetter, Chairs

On Tuesday **May 24, 2016**, the Social Travel Committee has arranged a tour for us at the **Portage County Historical Society at 10 a.m.** The cost is \$5.00 . The location is 6549 N. Chestnut St. Ravenna, Ohio 44266. Contact: Phyllis Spangler at 330-593-5253, 5870 Horning Rd. Kent, Ohio 44240

On Sunday June 26, 2016, is **Monty Python's Spamalot at the Weathervane Playhouse**, 1301 Weathervane Lane, Akron 44313.

The cost is \$20.00 with **reservations due by June 2, 2016**. Contact Wendy Cooley at 1856 Stepping Stone Trail, Atwater, Ohio 44201. Her phone is 330-325-1998. Following the play, dinner will be at Papa Joe's Restaurant at the intersection of Portage Trail and Akron Peninsula Road. (Individual checks for meals)



Pat Gynn proudly displayed her frog collection at the March luncheon meeting.



At the March luncheon meeting, Dave Gynn, right, looked carefully at the sampling of Ron Snowberger's stamp collection.

MEDICARE NEWS

Medicare opens new push on hip, knee replacement in an effort to follow patients more closely and head off complications. The idea is to smooth patient's recovery and head off unwanted complications that increase costs. This took affect April 1, 2016.

PCRTA MEMBERSHIP LIST IS SAFE

PCRTA will **never** share our mailing list with anyone but ORTA. The membership mailing list is available to board members who have access in the secured portion of our website. Board members will use discretion when accessing this site.

Please help us keep the list current. Let us know if you have a change in address, email, phone or cell phone number. (The cost for the Post Office to let us know of a changed address is \$1.55.) We will notify ORTA of mailing address and email changes.

WHAT'S NEW AT ORTA? by Dave Gynn

At the ORTA Executive Board retreat last month, I was installed as the Eastern Area Vice President. We are saddened at the death of Jean Slicker, who was elected to this position. I am eager to fill this role this year.

We discussed several actions important to a smooth transaction with our new Executive Director, Dr. John Cavanaugh. President Carol Remington is challenging ORTA by Building Relationships.....Growing Membership. Committees are active and looking at new ways to make ORTA even more relevant for retired teachers. InsPiRe Group (a PR firm) has been contracted to work with the staff and board to handle ORTA communications.

At our regular monthly meeting on March 31, we joined with the finance committee (Ron Snowberger is a member of this committee) to interview four investment firms. We selected UBS Financial Services to manage our portfolio. The staff selected Dawson Staffing to search for a replacement office manager.

PCRTA PORTAGE COUNTY RETIRED TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Dave Gynn
4210 Lancaster Lane
Kent, Ohio 44240

Please notify PCRTA of any address change

Address Codes

S=State (ORTA) P=Portage(PCRTA)

Life memberships are indicated by (life)
and annual memberships are indicated by
(ann) + the year.

Example: S(life) P(ann) 2014 means that
local dues are paid through 2014 and
would be due at this time in 2015.

www.pcrtanet.org

Karen Balog

Connie Evans



Webmasters

2016 PCRTA/ ORTA MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name _____

Retirement District & Year _____

Mailing address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone _____ Cell _____

Email _____

PCRTA \$10.00- ORTA \$30.00 = \$40.00 _____

Scholarship donation _____

PCRTA Life Membership = \$150.00 _____

ORTA Life Membership = \$500.00 _____

Total of check _____

Make check payable to PCRTA. Complete the form and mail both to:

Dave Gynn 4210 Lancaster Ln., Kent, OH 44240