

Greater Bridgeport Retired Teachers Association

MARCH 2016

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From the President's Podium

“The greatest gifts you can give your children are the roots of responsibility and the wings of independence” (Denis Waitley)



Many teachers have an effect on students that is not always evident until years later. Recently, on my Facebook page, I asked readers for comments about a positive effect that a teacher had on their life. Here are some of their replies:

“She not only had a great personality and sense of humor that she infused into her classes, but she pushed me and all of her students to be our best by challenging our thinking and encouraging us to think outside the box. Her passion for helping others inspired me to do the same while I was her student and for all the years since.”

“I had just come to this country and did not speak English. My third grade teacher spent many hours after school and on weekends tutoring me at the library, our home, and hers. She made it her mission to make sure I learned the language. I will never forget her – to this day, she is my inspiration.”

“My second grade teacher was young and always trying fun learning games, timed math, and what today are called centers. I remember her making me feel like I could do anything if I put my mind to it and worked hard. She often had different kids after school for good things and would often “trick” us into learning a new skill. Sometimes the only structured and safe place is school, and the only friendly face these kids see is at school.”

“I was a new sixth grader at the school and the Principal recognized my ability to work with students in mathematics and asked if I would tutor a fourth grade girl. She made me feel important and capable” – and today, I am a math teacher!”

“I have to give a tie to two teachers that both influenced me on a number of levels but mostly because of their thoughtful approach, warm demeanor, and respect for their students. One who enhanced my junior high science experiences and had the respect of many of my peers and one a math teacher who saw strength in me when I had no hope of getting through years of math! It was both of those teachers’ influences that I think brought me to the field of social work and I thank them for that.”

Teachers do make a difference.

Bob Pitzschler



Bob Pitzschler welcomes new attendees Carol Bertilson and Rita McDougald-Campbell to the December meeting.

Photo by Helen Scinto

Something New!

Breakfast on April 7. See details on page 3.

Mark Your Calendar for Upcoming Trips

Co-chairs Lois Hoyt (203-261-6693/ Ldh29@aol.com) and Pat Jacobsen (203-367-9217/ pmjacobson@aol.com) have scheduled a variety of spring trips. Contact them for reservations and check the website (www.gbrta.org) for further information.

• April 10-17, 2016

Spectacular Springtime in the Smoky Mountains and Nashville

Many attractions, including Grand Old Opry

\$1699 double, \$2099 single, \$1631 triple

Includes bus, hotels, 14 meals, admissions, gratuities

Cancellation insurance available/recommended

Payment due immediately. Contact Lois.

• April 19, 2016

“Daffodil Days”

Blithewold Mansion and Gardens, Bristol, RI

Lunch at Lobster Pot Restaurant

\$99 includes bus, lunch, admission, gratuities

Payment due by March 8, 2016

• May 15, 2016

“Best Little Whorehouse in Texas”

Warner Theater in Torrington

Lunch at San Marino in Waterbury

\$96 includes bus, lunch, tickets, gratuity

Payment due by March 25, 2016

• May 31-June 3, 2016

Best of Bar Harbor

Features Arcadia National Park Carriage Ride and

Frenchman’s Bay Boat Cruise

\$715 double, \$933 single, \$695 triple

Includes bus, hotel, 6 meals, admissions, gratuities

Cancellation insurance available/recommended

Payment due by April 19, 2016

And hold these dates:

July 12-19	Mackinac Island
July 27	Old Sturbridge Village Lunch/Cabaret Show
August 25	Lobsterfeast & Patsy Cline Tribute Log Cabin, Holyoke, MA
October 19-21	“Samson” at Millenium Theatre, Lancaster, PA

Details in May newsletter

Lobby Day: Let Your Voice Be Heard

This year, for the first time, retired teachers will be able to exclude 10% of their Connecticut pension from 2015 state income taxes. If, for example, you receive a pension of \$40,000, only \$36,000 is subject to CT tax. (See Form CT-1040, Schedule I, line 45). That benefit was fought for and won by years of lobbying by the Association of Retired Teachers of CT (ARTC). The bill that provided that benefit calls for a 25% reduction in the 2016 tax year. With the State deficit and proposed cuts, will that provision stand? Clearly a concerted lobbying effort will be required.

One part of that effort is Lobby Day, this year scheduled for April 6, at the legislative offices in Hartford. On Lobby Day, co-sponsored this year by ARTC, CEA-R, and UFT, retired teachers meet with their own state senators and representatives to explain the issues that are important to them and their colleagues—not only taxes but their pension and health insurance as well. Don’t know what to say? On the morning of Lobby Day, the ARTC lobbyist and legislative committee will meet with retirees and provide fact sheets to facilitate their meetings with the legislators. Legislators and attendees are invited to continue their conversations over a light lunch.

The GBRTA, in conjunction with ARTC, will sponsor a Lobby Day bus to Hartford—with a \$5 charge for GBRTA members and a \$10 charge for non-members. It will pick up at the usual GBRTA trip stops in Fairfield (Villa Avenue Stop and Shop) and Trumbull (Penny Avenue commuter lot). To reserve your place on the bus, send a check for \$5, made out to GBRTA, to Bob Pitzschler at 4 Laurel Ridge, Chatfield Farms, Beacon Falls, CT 06403. The check, with your phone number noted on it, should reach Bob by March 30.

Please consider spending Lobby Day with your colleagues in advocating for your benefits.

GBRTA OFFICERS 2015-2017

President:	Bob Pitzschler	203-723-8488 rbpitz@att.net
1 st Vice-President:	RoseMarie D’Aquila	203-261-4693 eaglesnest@att.net
2 nd Vice-President:	Barbara Kmetz	203-268-8814 bfkmetz@earthlink.net
Treasurer:	Bonnie Drozeck	203-929-4940 bonziedro@gmail.com
Recording Sec.:	Marilyn Feranec	203-521-2432 marilynferanec@ymail.com
Corresponding Sec.:	Sandra Petrucelli-Carbone	203-463-8404 spcdkg@comcast.net

Make Your Reservations

Testo's Restaurant, Bridgeport, CT

April 7, 2016 9:30 AM Breakfast \$18.00

Meeting to follow at 10:45 AM.

Breakfast buffet includes orange juice, muffins and bagels, scrambled eggs, bacon, French toast, coffee and tea.

Reserve by 4/1 Cancel by 4/5

May 12, 2016 Lunch follows 10:30 AM meeting \$23.00

Chicken Marsala Pork medallions Breaded tilapia

Reserve by 5/6 Cancel by 5/10

- Make checks payable to GBRTA. Note date and menu choice on check. Checks must accompany reservations. No checks accepted at the door.
- **Reserve /cancel with:**
Barbara Chuga, 27 Kitcher Court, Trumbull, CT 06611 (203-268-4535, chuga@att.net)
Kathleen Feller, 35 Cameo Road, Stratford, CT 06614 (203-380-1945, katfeller@optonline.net)
- Members may attend only the GBRTA meeting without making a breakfast/lunch reservation. There will be a table for meeting-attendees only. To assure adequate seating, please contact Barbara Chuga or Kathleen Feller if you are coming.

April Meeting Features a Breakfast Buffet

In response to many requests, we are trying something new with our general membership meetings: a breakfast buffet. Several members have suggested, that as a way to attract more members, we should try changing the "usual" meeting agenda with different menus, time schedules, venue, etc. Accordingly, our April 7 meeting at Testo's will begin with a breakfast buffet at 9:30 followed by the business meeting at 10:45. This should allow time not only to enjoy the meal but to socialize with the other attendees before the meeting begins.

GBRTF to Elect Slate for 2016-2018

Nominating committee members Sandra Petrucelli-Carbone (chair), Roz Schoonmaker, and Joyce Sweeney have prepared a slate of officers and board members for the Greater Bridgeport Retired Teachers' Fund for 2016-2018. Following are the proposed officers: President, Andrew Figlar; 1st Vice-President, Lynn Corra; 2nd Vice-President, Walter Drozeck; Recording Secretary, Mary McIntyre; Corresponding Secretary, Deborah Broccoli; Treasurer, Jo-Ann Olsen.

The proposed board members are Robert Caciopoli, Gloria Francesconi, Veronica Hendrick, Sandra Petrucelli-Carbone, Rosalyn Schoonmaker, Greta Stanford, Anita Tomasco, Michael Ward, and Pat Yacovacci.

The slate will be voted on at the annual GBRTF meeting, which immediately follows the GBRTA meeting, on May 12.

IN BRIEF

Thanks to Marilyn Mitchell and Debbie Ruby for the December raffle that netted just over \$460 for the Scholarship Fund.

The annual Memorial Service will precede the business meeting on May 12.

Welcome to new members Lynda O'Donnell, Audrey Beres, Rita McDougald-Campbell, Norma Young, Patrice Lundgren, and Lucien Zeffiro.

In May, Member Services chairperson Peggy Vaughn (203-452-8219) will distribute spring flowers to members who are hospitalized, shut-in, or homebound. If you know someone who qualifies, please inform Peggy.

The ARTC spring meeting will be held on May 17 at Aqua Turf. For details call the ARTC office at 860-284-9760.

The CEA-R spring meeting is May 26, also at Aqua Turf. For information, contact Greta Stanford at 203-878-8081.

Please notify Nan Stern at 203-261-9791 or nanstern19@aol.com if you change your phone number, home or email address.

IN MEMORIAM

Joseph Rutkosky	11/23/15
Geraldine Johnson	11/28/15
Mary Louise Foerth	12/28/15
Patricia Belade	1/11/16
Joan DelVecchio	1/13/16
Margaret Clinkscales	1/22/16
Robert Hustek	2/12/16



GBRTA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Annual Dues: \$20 Life Membership: \$250

Membership year runs from July 1-June 30. Please keep your dues current. Anyone behind in dues for two years or more will be dropped from the membership file and must repay two-years' back dues to be reinstated.

Mail form and dues (payable to GBRTA) to Nan Stern, 44 Lafayette Drive, Trumbull, CT 06611

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip code _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Year retired _____ School system _____