

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE ISTA-RETIRED

Volume 16, Issue 1
Sept/Oct 2026

NEA RETIRED ANNUAL MEETING

The 2026 NEA-Retired Annual Meeting took place from June 30 to July 1, at the Hilton Denver City Center in Denver, CO. It served as a core pre-conference event for the NEA Representative Assembly held July 4 to July 7. The umbrella theme was “Resilience. Respect. Power. Saving Public Education and Our Democracy.” Over 300 retired delegates from across the country gathered to vote on governance documents, debate New Business Items, and align retiree advocacy with NEA’s legislative priorities. The 2026 meeting marked a transition to mandatory photo ID badges for all checked-in delegates and guests as an added security measure.

Delegates debated and acted upon submitted New Business Items focusing on retiree benefits, pension protections and active organizational framework strategies. The 2025 minutes were reviewed and adopted, and a proposed bylaw amendment and updates to the new-Retired Elections Rules were voted upon.

Anita Gibson of Alabama was reelected NEA-Retired President, and Brenda McGown from Kentucky was elected NEA-Retired Secretary. Other positions included NEA-Retired Executive Council seats, Board of Directors along with alternates, and Resolutions Committee members.

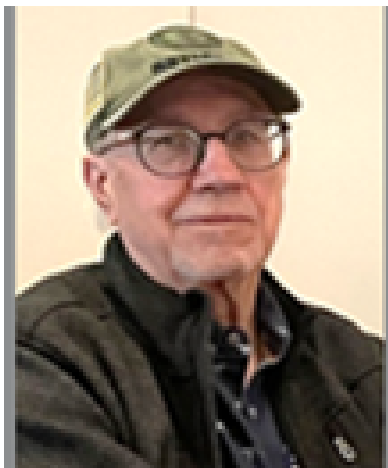
Delegates raised funds through the silent auction and live auctions for NEA-PAC and the Jack Kinnamon Scholarship Fund.

The 105th NEA Representative Assembly marked a change in leadership from outgoing President Becky Pringle to elected NEA President Princess Moss from Virginia. Also elected was Noel Candelaria from Texas as the Vice President.

NEA Retired National President Anita Gibson looks on as then NEA Vice – President Princess Moss addresses the delegates at the NEA-Retired Annual Meeting. Delegates were Jan Hayes, Roger Sharp, Rod Ellcessor, Ginger Calhoun, Sue Wygant and Terry Tafflinger



FROM THE CHAIR



I told you in the last edition of the Chalkboard that we would be providing you with a new layout and look. We also have changed the dates on which you will receive the Chalkboard. This edition is a full month earlier than originally planned. We have moved the dates out to be able to include our Retired events in a timelier manner and hope you enjoy. We welcome your comments on our changes and look forward to serving you better.

Our ISTA-Retired yearly conference will be held on October 28th and 29th. Noel Candela, the NEA vice president is among the speakers. He was the former NEA Secretary-Treasurer. He was elected overwhelmingly at this summer's NEA Representative Assembly. While Secretary-Treasurer, he chaired the NEA Committee on Artificial Intelligence among many other committees. The topic of our conference will be Artificial Intelligence. We have lined up some of the best experts in education in Indiana including Matthew White who is the Indiana Department of Education head of Digital Technology. See the story on page 7 about the conference.

As you may know, the NEA Representative Assembly will be held in Indianapolis next year. Keith Gambill, our immediate past president of ISTA, is heading the preparations for the conference. The NEA-Retired Annual Meeting will be held in Indianapolis from June 27-28 preceding the R.A. The Greater Indianapolis Chapter is planning on participating and helping make sure the Annual Meeting is successful. If you are interested in volunteering at the Annual Meeting or the NEA R.A., please let us know. Finally, Ginger Calhoun and I were re-elected as Vice Chair and Chair for another two-year term. We look forward to serving you to the best of our ability. Thank you for your membership, and we hope to see you at an upcoming Retired Chapter meeting.

Rod



Retired

150 W. Market St., Suite 900
Indianapolis, IN 46204-2875

Rod Ellcessor, State Chair
Jan Hayes, The Chalkboard Editor

Information on ISTA-Retired chapters, officers, meeting locations and activities can be found on the ISTA website, ista-in.org. If you are not a member of a local retired chapter and would like to be, contact 844-ASK-ISTA or Retired Chair Rod Ellcessor at 317-501-9508 for specifics of the chapter nearest you.



Shop at the NEA Discount Marketplace to find discounts at over 3,500 stores. Plus, get exclusive cash back deals only for NEA members.

Membership

If you know someone who
worked in education and has
now retired,
be sure to invite
them to join ISTA-Retired.

***Memberships are
payable via check,
electronic transfer,
credit card or plain old
hard cash!***

Save at the NEA Discount Marketplace

You Visit online at: neamb.com/products/nea-discount-marketplace for details.

HEART OF FIRE: AN IMMIGRANT DAUGHTER'S STORY**BY SEN. MAZIE K. HIRONO**

A good read that involves politics – is that possible? Absolutely! Mazie Hirono, a U.S. Senator from Hawaii, wrote her own story chiefly to honor her mother, Laura Cheiko, and her grandmother, Baachan, but also to pay homage to her immigrant experience in achieving the American Dream. The story begins with an overview of her grandmother's few years in America as a "picture bride" and the subsequent return to Japan with daughter Laura, Hirono's mother. Hirono then focuses on how Laura, initially as a wife in a traditional but abusive Japanese family and then as a single parent in Hawaii of the 1950's, influenced the young Hirono by her hard work and self-sufficiency, resolve, patience and dedication to her children.

The years of Hirono's schooling in the islands and subsequent college study are historically and culturally interesting. During the undergraduate years, she became involved in politics, volunteering as a political aide. Due to her effectiveness she quickly moved into campaign management. Eventually her friends recognized her talents and recommended she run for office herself. She won municipal and state offices but lost the gubernatorial race in 2002. In 2006, when Hawaii had an open seat in the House of Representatives she won and kept it for three terms. In 2013, Hirono moved on to the Senate. While in the House, she had cultivated her assertive capacities, long held in check by her Japanese background, and these were evident during the Senate Judiciary Committee hearings for the confirmation of Brett Kavanaugh. She still holds her Senate seat and is one of the most highly regarded members.

This immigrant's daughter's journey is one of personal growth, self-discovery, reflection and achievement, but also one of pride and joy in her two cultures. Hirono's story shows how a political career can truly be a tale of honorable, long-long service.

Submitted by Bonnie J. Fisher, Member of Limestone Chapter

DAVID HANNAH GOLDEN TOUCH AND COMMUNITY AWARD

This year's award recipients for the David Hannah Golden Touch Award were Harriet Klene and Terry Tafflinger both ISTA-Retired members. This prestigious award recognizes contributions of retired members of ISTA-Retired who have demonstrated leadership in the Association. A strong emphasis is placed on promoting ISTA-Retired, continuing leadership, involvement in political action, continuing efforts promoting public education, and membership for ISTA-Retired. Congratulations to Harriet Klene and Terry Tafflinger for receiving this well-deserved award.

The Community Service Award recipient this year was awarded to Janet Anthony, Blue River Chapter member. The Community Service award recognizes outstanding examples of courage, commitment, innovation and dedication for a community. Janet Anthony is the first retired member to receive this award. Congratulations to Janet Anthony on receiving this well-deserved award.



Harriet Klene and Terry Tafflinger

Minutes with Michael



This month, the field organizers of the government relations team and I have been working hard at setting up interviews with candidates with our local LPACs. We have interviewed over 50 candidates across the state, and we have put forward over 30 recommendations for endorsement with I-PACE. We also invited all the candidates for Indiana Secretary of State to sit for an interview with I-PACE. Beau Bayh and Lauri Shillings responded and came to Intech for an interview. After much discussion, it was the recommendation of the committee to give an endorsement for Beau Bayh's campaign. We met and spoke with many excellent candidates. Our focus has turned to targeting specific races that we feel we need to flip and races we need to protect. In order to break the supermajority in the House, we will need to take four seats. To be comfortable, we want to pick up at least six seats. In the Senate, we are looking at a couple of seats to protect them and maybe flip one or two of them. It won't break the supermajority in the Senate, but every seat we pick up helps us.

As endorsements wrap up, I'm turning my focus to legislative action. I will be activating members across the state to begin working for those candidates that have been endorsed. I will be communicating with members on which candidates have been endorsed. We want to get these candidates elected as they are committed to public education and the pensions of our retired teachers.

For public education, for the public good. Please reach out at any time. I have a lot to learn as I begin this new journey, and I look forward to learning from all of you!

Michael Lovely
ISTA Staff Retired Coordinator

Recipe Corner

FUDGE RIBBON PIE

FUDGE SAUCE

In saucepan, mix:

- 2 Tbsp. butter
- 2 (1 oz. squares) of unsweetened chocolate
- 1 c. sugar
- 1 (6 oz. or 2/3 c.) can evaporated milk

Cook and stir until thick.

Add 1 tsp vanilla cool

Spread 1 pint softened peppermint or strawberry ice cream in on 9" graham cracker pie crust. Freeze.

Cover ice cream with half the cooled Fudge Sauce and freeze.

Repeat layer of ice cream and fudge sauce. Freeze overnight or until firm.

Top with Cool whip or whipped cream. Freeze.

Serve.

LaVaughn J. Ferris, WEA
What's Cooking Teach? ISTA, 1975

Summer Conference / ISTA-Retired Chairperson

This year's Summer Conference was held July 14-15 at INTECH One, 6325 Digital Way, Indianapolis. Retired members presented the program "Am I Ready to Retire?" each of two days. Rod Ellcessor, ISTA-Retired Chairperson and Roger Sharp, Legislative Chair presented the first half that focused on Indiana Public Retirement System, INPRS.

They explained the Indiana Public Retirement System, Teachers Retirement Fund and Public Employee Retirement Fund. In the pre-96 plan, the employee and the employer contributed to the fund with no actuarial determinations of future cost. In 1995 the Indiana Pension Stabilization Fund was established. In 2018 SEA 373 was passed to create a paid yearly pension increase which funds 13th checks and COLA's.

Following their presentation, Terry Tafflinger, ISTA-Retired Secretary and Scholarship Chairperson, Ginger Calhoun, ISTA-Retired Vice Chairperson and Membership Chair and Jan Hayes, ISTA-Retired Newsletter Chair explained how local active associations are able to schedule a pre-retirement seminar. The seminar consists of four components: elder law/ estate planning, social security, Medicare and Indiana Public Retirement System. Elder law/estate planning is presented by Don Evans, attorney and counselor at law. Craig Blume, a certified senior advocate (CSA), registered social security analyst (RSSA) and an American Medicaid Disability Advocate (AMDA) presents the social security and Medicare part of the program. A representative of INPRS explains the options available. Each seminar participant receives a folder of materials explaining the program and the benefits of continuing membership by join ISTA-Retired.

The reward of joining that day was a free membership given to one lucky person. To learn more about hosting a pre-retirement seminar in your area have your local president, UniServ Director, or Board Members contact Ginger Calhoun at gingercalhoun2@gmail.com or call 574-952-6491.

Pictured is the lucky winner of the ISTA-Retired lifetime membership



KNOW YOUR LEADERS

ZONE 2 COORDINATOR - JAN HAYES

RETIRED CHAPTERS AND ZONES

ZONE 1 - COORDINATOR – MICHELLE BLOUGH: 1-F RETIRED, ALLEN COUNTY, ELKHART COUNTY, ISTA/NEA OF NE INDIANA

ZONE 2 - COORDINATOR – JAN HAYES: 1-B RETIRED, DUNES SHORE, LAKE COUNTY, WABASH COUNT

ZONE 3 - COORDINATOR - VACANT: CHAPTERS – POSEY COUNTY SULLIVAN COUNTY, VANDERBURGH COUNTY, WARRICK COUNTY

ZONE 4 - COORDINATOR – TERRY TROXELL: CHMT RETIRED, EAST CENTRAL RETIRED, FRANCES SLOCUM, JAWS RETIRED, REECI

ZONE 5 - COORDINATOR – ROGER SHARP: GREATER INDY, HAMILTON COUNTY, LIMESTONE RETIRED

ZONE 6 - COORDINATOR – KAREN WARBLE: BLUE RIVER, FALLS OF THE OHIO, JACKSON-SCOTT-WASHINGTON

REMINDERS

DON'T FORGET TO GET YOUR ISTA FOUNDATION LICENSE PLATE FOR YOUR VEHICLE. THE SPECIALTY FEE IS \$40 WITH \$25 COMING BACK TO THE ISTA FOUNDATION. THE ISTA FOUNDATION RETIRED SCHOLARSHIP WILL RECEIVE THE FIRST \$5000 EACH YEAR FOR RETIRED SCHOLARSHIPS.

RETIRED CHAPTER GRANTS ARE NOW AVAILABLE ON LINE. GO TO THE ISTA WEBSITE AND APPLY TODAY BEFORE THE DEADLINE.

Callie Marksberry showing the school supplies donated by ISTA-Retired at the July, 2026 meeting for ISTA Aspiring



1-F CHAPTER

1-F Retired Teachers Chapter met August 6, 2026 at Salvatori's Italian Restaurant in Warsaw, Indiana for lunch before seeing the musical "Anything Goes" at the Wagon Wheel Center for the Arts theater. Thirty people came together to enjoy fellowship and lunch before the show. Following lunch a total of 28 went to the show.

Several members from other retired chapters joined the group. Next year 1-F Retired Teachers Chapter plans to host the lunch and show "Million Dollar Quartet" a tribute to Carl Perkins, Johnny Cash, Elvis Presley and Jerry Lee Lewis. Watch for the announcement in the Chalkboard calendar of August, 2027.



ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE – ISTA-RETIRED CONFERENCE

The ISTA-Retired Conference will be held October 28 – 29, 2026 at the INTECH Conference Center, Building 1, 2nd Floor, 6325 Digital Way, Indianapolis, IN. This conference is about Artificial Intelligence and how it affects education and our lives. If you have a laptop or tablet, you are encouraged to bring it with you as there will be active participation.

Day 1 Wednesday, October 28 (3:00-4:45 p.m. following State Council Meeting, registration at hotel) Conference begins at 5:00 p.m. with welcome by the Retired Membership Committee: Ginger Calhoun – Vice Chair of ISTA-Retired and Membership Committee Chair, Terry Tafflinger – ISTA-Retired Secretary and Scholarship Committee Chair, and Jan Hayes – Newsletter Committee Chair. Dinner at 5:30-6:30 and program begins at 6:30 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. when attendees will learn about AI and Data Centers and take part in hands-on sessions using AI tools such as ChatGPT, Copilot, Claude, and Gemini presented by Rod Ellcessor Retired Statewide District Chair.

Day 2 Thursday, October 29 (8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.) Lunch will be provided.

Special guests include Noel Candelaria the NEA Vice-President and Keith Gambill – Immediate Past ISTA President, Anna Shults Indiana Department of Education Literary Specialist, Matthew White – Department of Education Digital Learning Specialist, Callie Marksbarry – retired representative of PPS Committee, Conner McNeely – Southport H.S. Educator who will discuss working with students in the digital era.

Chapter presidents are asked to invite members to this event. Rooms are based on single or double occupancy and overnight accommodation is free of charge for attendees. To register, visit www.ista.in.org, select Our Leadership, then Members, Retired, and scroll down to the conference registration link or at Your paragraph text. Contact Mamie Morris, mmorris@ista-in.org or Rod Ellcessor, rellcessor@gmail.com should you have questions. Registration must be completed by October 15, 2026.

Please bring items for the I-Pace silent auction on October 28 and the ISTA-Retired Scholarship silent auction on October 29.

PALM CARDS

The Retired Legislative Committee has created a palm card for members to use when explaining the significant loss of pension buying power. A retiree who began receiving a pension in 2012 has lost about 40% of that pension's value when adjusted for the Consumer Price Index (CPI). We are using these cards to share our stories with the public, especially legislators. We want you to explain that we were promised a livable pension. Most teachers accepted lower starting salaries than college graduates in other fields because they expected reliable retirement benefits. From 1975 through 2008, retirees received annual increases of 1% to 3%. Since 2010, however, we have received only one 1% increase in 2022. In most years, we have received a stipend known as the 13th check, but it is not added to our base pension. The Indiana Public Retirement System can clearly afford a real percentage increase. INPRS's net value has grown by an annual average of 7.8% over the past 10 years, rising from \$28 billion to \$64 billion.

The cards are available at chapter meetings.

Question:

Ask your legislator to vote for a yearly increase for public employees' pensions.

INPRS Pension Values

2010-2026
Inflation of 40% → COLA increase 1%

INPRS net assets have grown 7.8% each year since 2017 from \$27 Billion to \$60 Billion.

Retired Public Employees deserve a real increase!

THE CHALKBOARD

KNOW YOUR LEADERS

KAREN WARBLE

“I just knew I always wanted to be a teacher! My mother worked at Bosse High School and from day one, a teacher it would be,” said Karen Warble when asked about her choice for her profession. For forty-three years, Karen taught kindergarten. Yes, 43 years and all in kindergarten! Why her entire career in kindergarten? “I always liked teaching the little feisty children; building an educational relationship with them was the key to discipline, and it worked. Of course, then the principal gave her all the “feisty” little ones!

Karen received her Bachelor’s degree at Indiana State University and her Master’s at Indiana University, Indianapolis. Karen was listed in Who’s Who on three occasions.

There’s always a beginning to Association membership and involvement. Like many of her colleagues, Karen joined the Association because it was expected of a professional; joining to have a unified voice for public education. At Shelbyville she served as secretary, president and building rep. She was a representative for Disco multiple years, a rep on the PAC Committee, and the Central Indiana School Employees Insurance Trust Board. She has served on the ISTA Board both as an active member and now as one of two retired representatives. On the Board she was elected to the Board Management Committee and the Executive Committee. She also chaired the Early Childhood Committee and can still be seen at the ISTA R.A. and past NEA R.A.’s.

Karen is married to Michael, a union of nearly 54 years. They have two children, four grandchildren, and dog Sophie, whom Karen readily agrees is the queen of the household!

Travel is a passion for Karen and her family. Learning about different cultures across the world is the most interesting facet of travel. Travels have taken them across the U.S., Caribbean, Cuba, Europe, Australia, and in May to Japan. A trip to South America is already planned for 2027.

Karen is politically active in lobbying, attending rallies, meeting face to face with state reps, knocking on doors to support candidates and walking to support contract demands. She was also elected by Shelby County as a delegate to the Indiana Republican Convention.

Moving into retirement has not slowed Karen down one little bit. As a retired member she served on the Archives Committee, as the Zone 6 Coordinator, ISTA Board representing the Retired, ISTA Retired Executive Committee, Communications Committees, a presenter at the Retired conference, and continues her political involvement.

ADVOCATE FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION, TRAVELOR, POLITICAL ACTIVIST, MOM, AND GRANDMA. SHE’S A GREAT EXAMPLE OF A WISE, HAPPY RETIREE.

***IMS Speedway outing for
Blue River Chapter Retired***



On August 5th Greater Indy heard Attorney Samantha DeWester talk about the election challenge to Senator Spencer Deery's victory by just three votes. Deery's victory was overturned by the Indiana Recount Commission headed by Secretary of State Diego Morales. Deery was one of the eight Senators who voted not to redistrict Indiana's Congressional District and then targeted by President Trump. DeWester defended Deery in his effort to sustain the election results. Twenty Greater Indy members heard DeWester explain the process and what she expected out of the case.

Rod Ellcessor



ISTA-RETIRED CALENDAR

September

- 1** Posey County, Evansville Museum. Contact Paul Allison at paulallison5876@gmail.com for details
- 8** 1:45 p.m., 1-F Retired Teachers Chapter, join us for "Tuesday's Teas at 2" and relax with cup of tea and other refreshments. Ruthmere Mansion located at Beardsley Discovery Center, 819 Main Street Elkhart, IN. Contact Ginger Calhoun (574-952-6491) or Jan Hayes (574-292-6624) to attend. Seats are limited. Cost = \$25.
- 10** Noon, ISTA-R, Allen County Chapter, NE ISTA (FWEA) Office, 3711 Rupp Dr. Suite 207, Ft. Wayne, IN. (Collection for ISTA-PAC) Meet ISTA-R State President Rod Ellcessor and Mike Lovely, Public Education Coordinator. 26/27 Legislative goals for retirees with Q & A. Catered lunch, Ziano's.
- 23** Lake County Chapter of ISTA, Inc [Retired] Wednesday, September 23, 2026 @HarryO's Restaurant, Ceder Lake "contact Dennis Keithley, President dkiu@aol.com for details "

October

- 5** 11:00 a.m., 1-F Retired Teachers Chapter, New Kitchen Store, 1100 Roosevelt Road, Walkerton, IN. Join us for a cooking class on making your own pizza. The instructor will demonstrate using kitchen appliances. There will be toppings available for the pizza. The New Kitchen Store offers countless culinary items from linens, coffees, teas, gadgets, cutlery, dinnerware to small appliances. Cost \$25. Contact Ginger Calhoun (574-952-6491) or Jan Hayes (574-292-6624) by September 21st to attend.
- 7** Greater Indianapolis Chapter at Intech office 6325 Digital Way Building 1, Beau Bayh, 11:00 a.m. RSVP to Joanne Solomom, jsjgsolo@aol.com
- 28** Retired State Council at Intech office 6325 Digital Way Building 1, 10 a.m.
- 28-29** Retired Conference at Intech office 6325 Digital Way Building 1, 5:00 p.m. on the 28th

November

- 12** Noon, ISTA-R, Allen County Chapter, McAllister's, 6709 Lima Rd., Ft. Wayne, IN (Collection for ISTA-R Scholarship Fund) Speaker: Sam Bostater, Aging and In-Home Services, Mktg./Com. Manager. Lunch on your own at McAllister's.

December

- 17** Greater Indianapolis Chapter, Beef & Boards, Holiday Inn, RSVP to Joanne Solomon, jsjgsolo@aol.com, Limited to first 25

Many programs are listed for entertainment. Each chapter is also involed in various political, community and educational projects.