

# The Chalkboard

The Official Newsletter of the ISTA-Retired

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August/September 2021

## ISTA-Retired Awards Two Scholarships

This year was indeed challenging, but we came together and made it happen. ISTA-Retired awarded two \$2,500 scholarships to two outstanding young ladies. Family members joined the ISTA-Retired State Council members July 25 for the presentation of scholarships. Congratulations to these exceptional young ladies and their bright future! Also, a heartfelt thanks to our members and staff who made it possible for ISTA-Retired to award these scholarships.



**Kiersten Boots**, nominated by her mother Sharilyn Boots, will attend Ball State University this fall to study nursing. She plans to further her education by becoming a pediatric nurse practitioner. While being involved in many activities and community service, she was able to become a Certified Nurse Assistant. As stated in her essay, “Working at a local retirement community has given me the opportunity to learn about patient care, observe the nurses, improve my skills...I look forward to being a nurse, and future Nurse Practitioner, treating and improving the lives of those in the community.”



**Jenifer Hudson**, nominated by her grandfather Merle Tooker of Shipshewana, overcame a physical obstacle to become an outstanding student athlete. She is actively involved in 4-H, her church’s youth group and sports. She has decided to major in elementary education. During the middle school years, she was diagnosed with scoliosis and had to wear a brace. This experience she said, “has helped her to see everyone is different and everyone is special in their own way...no one can make you feel inferior without your consent.” Hudson will attend Grace College in Winona Lake, IN, this fall as a student athlete.

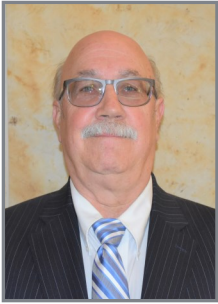
*Jan Hayes, Scholarship Chair, ISTA-Retired*

## 2021 Virtual NEA-Retired Annual Meeting

An observation made during the June 23 – 24, 2021, virtual NEA-Retired Annual Meeting was on grace, composure and resolve demonstrated by our NEA-Retired President Sarah Borgman as she guided attendees through a meeting riddled with technical difficulties. She placed no blame on anyone as she remained composed on screen while those around her worked to correct multiple problems over which she had no control. She guided us through the business of the meeting with confidence that we have come to expect of Borgman as she spoke with conviction on key retirement issues. I believe the two-day meeting was productive due to the leadership of our president. Of course, we knew Borgman would lead us by displaying a positive example of how to fulfill one’s task with resilience. Thank you!

*Cont’d. page three*

## From the Chair



*Rod Ellcessor, ISTA-Retired State Chair*

We just ended the NEA Representative Assembly after four days of virtual viewing. I hope this is the last virtual year and all representatives will be attending live next year. We were addressed by President Joe Biden and First Lady Dr. Jill Biden and Georgia's fantastic organizer, Stacey Abrams, among others. Our NEA President Becky Pringle gave a rousing address and chaired the proceedings. Sixty-five new business items were initially offered of which only twenty-one were adopted. Those of you who have been delegates know the amount of time that these all take in debate! Pringle reminded us of the battle we have had with overcoming the pandemic, technological challenges, new ways to teach and the fight for our democracy. She summarized her speech inspiring us by stating, "With our persistence and perseverance, we lead the transformation of public education, of teaching and learning, our noble professions."

I want to update you on the upcoming ISTA Conference on September 10-12. We will offer sessions for retired members and awarding several members with recognition. Make sure that you watch your email or go to the ISTA website for information. Also, most of our chapters are now holding live meetings, once again. Make sure that you look for your chapter meeting times contained in this newsletter.

ISTA opened the field offices in Evansville, Scottsburg, Valparaiso, Fort Wayne and Indianapolis-Shadeland on July 1. We held our first live retired meeting on July 26. I will report on that meeting in the next edition. I know that this last year has been one of the most challenging for all of us but believe that the glass is half empty, and we now see the sun rising again. Take care and thanks for your membership in ISTA.



Retired

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ista-in.org

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.

### 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!**



## Find Labor Day Deals with the NEA Auto Buying Program

If you're in the market for a new or used car, the NEA Auto Buying Program through TrueCar is the first place you should look! NEA members and their families enjoy preferred pricing year-round, save an average of \$3,125\* off MSRP on new cars.

**Visit the NEA Auto Buying Program today to see how much you can save! Go to [www.neamb.com/buyacar](http://www.neamb.com/buyacar)**

## Highlights of Member's Trip to Grand Rapids



**1-F Retired Chapter Vice-President Michelle Blough**

For a wonderful outdoor experience, visit the Frederick Meijer Gardens and Sculpture Park in Grand Rapids, Michigan. The park is on 158 acres of beautiful gardens and art. All tickets are purchased on-site at various price-points. The staff is helpful organizing group visits. Your membership at the Wellfield Gardens in Elkhart and other gardens provides free admission. The

picturesque pathways connect the sculpture and specialty gardens. There is a shade garden, Japanese garden, 1880's Michigan Farmstead with a 1930's farm garden and interactive children's garden to name a few. There are yearly plant shows, concerts and other special events. The annual spring butterfly exhibit in the Tropical Conservatory features 7,000 butterflies flying freely and the month of October highlights a special chrysanthemum display. The cafe provides a variety of cold sandwiches and hot entrees. A picnic area is also available for families and groups. Check the website [meijergardens.org](http://meijergardens.org) for current health protocols.

If you decide to spend additional time in Grand Rapids, visit the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library and Museum and the Grand Rapids Children's Museum. The downtown walkway along the river near the convention center is a lovely stroll. There are also shopping, dining and lodging choices available.

*Michelle Blough, Goshen, Indiana*

## 2021 Virtual NEA-Retired Annual Meeting (cont'd. from page one)

NEA-Retired works very hard to organize retired NEA members. To identify and salute those retired state affiliates who are leaders in organizing, four awards are presented annually at the NEA-Retired Annual Meeting:

**Largest Numerical Increase** (First Place Winner and Runner Up) recognizes retired state affiliates with the largest number increase in membership numbers.

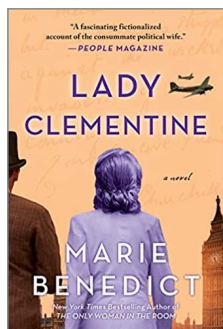
**Largest Percentage Increase** (First Place Winner and Runner Up) acknowledges retired state affiliates that have increased their membership by the largest percentage.

Membership numbers as of June 1 are the basis for determining the award recipients each year. Award winners receive a certificate and recognition during the Retired Annual Meeting.

The Membership Hall of Fame is one additional award that acknowledges retired state affiliates that have achieved top membership recruitment status for three years. The years do not need to be consecutive to win, and once a state is placed in the Hall of Fame, it cannot win again in that same membership category for three years to give other retired state affiliates an opportunity to be honored for their organizing efforts. Retired affiliates designated Hall of Fame winners are announced during the NEA-Retired Annual Meeting, and these winners also receive certificates and recognition detailing achievements.

*Terry Tafflinger, 2021 NEA-Retired Annual Meeting and NEA RA Delegate*

## Lady Clementine by Marie Benedict



### Book Review

*Lady Clementine*, better known to readers as Mrs. Winston Churchill, is pictured in this historical novel as Winston Churchill's most important supporter and adviser during his tenure as both a naval officer and as the Prime Minister of England. They had a mutual attraction to one

another from the start based on their love of politics. Clementine had her own opinions and worked through her husband to see them to fruition. In the earlier part of their marriage, she seemed to have quite a few health problems

(nerves mainly) and in addition to going away for rest she also went frequently on trips with Winston for political reasons. She admitted it was better to leave her children with a nanny as she recognized she was not a good mother. This came back to haunt her in the death of one child and the demeanor of her other children. There is no doubt Clementine played an important role in supporting her husband and in various charities during WWII, but at what price? It is obvious the author did much research in uncovering specific details of this portrait of Clementine Churchill.

## Five Things to Tell Your Future Executor

- **Where the original will is.**

Identify the exact spot in your home. If it's filed with an attorney, provide the contact information. If it's stored online, specify the website. Don't put it in a safe deposit box, where it can be difficult to access after your death.

- **Whom to notify.**

List contacts your executor or family might not think to tell or know how to reach, such as doctors, your employer's HR chief or clubs you belong to. Include contact info to make things easier for the person designated for this task.

- **Your passwords.**

Share passwords and access codes for email, social media and other online accounts, and for any cellphones or computers. Provide instructions about how to handle the accounts and devices. Don't want your executor to be able to access all this while you're alive? Give the passwords to someone else you trust.

- **Who gets what.**

Specify what happens to nonfinancial items such as recipes, photos and mementos. "Think about the things in your life that are special to you, that tell a little bit about you to future generations," says Abby Schneiderman of Everplans.

- **Where your secrets are hidden.**

Point the executor — or another trustworthy person — to any skeletons you want cleaned from your closets, such as love letters from an ex, nude photos and medicine you have been covertly taking.

## Wood Carving as a Hobby

Carving is an ancient craft. There are carvings in reindeer horn, mammoth ivory and stone that date from prehistoric times. Early people probably also carved in wood. It would have been an easy material to work with but would not have survived for thousands of centuries. Ancient Egyptians carved scenes of hunting and victories in battle on their chariots. Norsemen carved dragon heads on the prows of their longships. Spanish galleons and British warships were adorned with fancy carvings. Yankee clippers had carved figureheads carved on their prows. Churches in England and Europe abound with carvings both artistic and functional. American Indians carved duck decoys and Northwest Indians carved totem poles and war canoes from logs. Peoples from all over the world have carved toys, idols, tools and utensils from wood.

Carving in wood is a combination of both art and craft. Wood has a warmth that cannot be duplicated in stone, metals, plastic or clay. It is easy to shape and cut and has a wide variety of patterns and colors. When finished, it has a pattern and glow that does not exist with other mediums. A penetrating sealer in flat or semi-gloss is a nice finish that is easy to use and dries quickly. A good wood to start with is basswood. This is a favorite with wood carvers, because it has a tight grain and is easy to carve. Sugar pine, butternut and catalpa are also popular woods.



If you are interested in trying carving, start with a simple standard carving knife with good steel. You can buy a good quality knife for around \$20. Some carvers carve with a jack knife or an interchangeable blade knife (Xacto) or even a boxcutter. Whatever you use it must be kept keenly sharp. You will want a carving glove and a thumb guard. You will want a fine sharpening stone and a strop to keep your knife sharp as well as band aids. Do not buy a set of tools now. You will wind up with tools you will not need or use.

There are three basic cuts, a stop cut, a push cut and a pull cut. You need to work with the grain of the wood to avoid splintering. I would suggest you look for a carving club or a wood carver near you. Working together is a great social adventure. Wood carvers are a lot of fun and are extremely helpful for beginners. You can also find wood carving and sharpening tutorials and information online. Do a search for beginning wood carving tutorials or classes. There are also several books for beginning carvers. YouTube has a wealth of information and can be a source of tools and books to help you get started. *Knife Carving made Simple* by Ivan Willock is an excellent and easy to follow book.

Warning: Wood carving can be addictive and expensive. Proceed with caution.

*Jerry Ervin, South Bend, Indiana*

## How to be a good executor

The wave of people prompted by the COVID-19 pandemic to write their wills is creating yet another wave in estate planning: all the people being asked to one day put those wills into effect. They are the executors – the relatives of friends designated in a will as the final administrator of a deceased person's estate. If you have agreed to serve as an executor you likely know the outlines of the task your face: closing accounts, inventory assets and distributing bequests. Even when it's a relatively simple situation – one spouse dies and leaves everything to the other – the papers work is daunting. But when it gets more complicated, like if a widow dies and there are a lot of children and assets, there's more. Much more. Follow these steps to ensure that, when the time comes for you to serve, you honor the deceased, serve his or her heirs, and do your job as efficiently as possible.

*Cont'd. page seven*

## 2021 Indiana Cheese Trail



Embark your tastebuds on a culinary journey to discover delicious cheese throughout the great state of Indiana. The 2021 Indiana Cheese Trail will virtually

guide you to 11 destinations that are made possible thanks to a collaboration of dairy farmers, creameries and small businesses who know cheese best.

Learn about Indiana cheeses and where you can purchase them at [IndianaCheeseTrail.com](http://IndianaCheeseTrail.com)

*My Indiana Home Summer 2021 magazine*

**Blue River Retired Chapter met June 7 in Columbus, Indiana. Members toured Irwin Gardens as well as the Irwin home.**



## Take a Rock, Leave a Sock

What started as a funny joke has turned into a quirky stop for hikers on the Tecumseh Trail. The Sock Barn, as it has now been dubbed, is an old green building with a large sign attached to the side that says, "Take a rock, leave a sock." The owners put up the sign in jest to invite hikers to take a free geode. They didn't think anyone would take it seriously – until socks appeared as folks took them up on their offer. Now, they've added a sign that reads, "Hikers! Please help yourself to a free geode!" Leaving a sock is optional, but plenty of good-humored visitors still leave a sock as a rite of passage. To experience the rock/sock swap yourself, head to Brown County's Tecumseh Trail just off State Road 46.

*My Indiana Home Summer 2021 magazine*



## Recipe Corner

### Easy Fruit Salad

Easy Fruit Salad is the perfect dessert, with a combo of berries, citrus fruit, kiwi, and grapes in a sweet sauce made from juice and honey and topped with fresh mint leaves. Serves: 18 Calories: 123 per serving

1/2 cup orange juice  
 1 teaspoon grated orange zest  
 1/4 cup lemon juice  
 1/4 cup honey  
 1 teaspoon vanilla extract  
 3 cups strawberries – cut in halves  
 4 tangerines – separated into sections  
 3 cups pineapple chunks  
 3 kiwi – peeled and sliced  
 2 cups blueberries  
 2 cups red grapes  
 mint – optional

### Instructions

1. Add the orange juice, orange zest, lemon juice, and honey to a saucepan and bring to a boil on medium heat, whisking for 3 – 4 minutes then turn off, add in the vanilla and let cool completely.
2. Add the fruit to a large bowl and toss carefully with the sauce and refrigerate for at least two hours (You can toss each fruit individually and line up the fruits rainbow order then garnish the fruit salad with mint).

*Sabrina Snyder, [dinnerthendessert.com/fruit-salad/](http://dinnerthendessert.com/fruit-salad/)*

## How to be a good executor (cont'd. from page five)

**Talk it over.** To ensure you understand the will writer's wishes, ask the person to be specific about what he or she truly wants to happen with the estate after the person's death. Then ask if all is detailed in the will.

**Start the paperwork.** Upon the person's death, nothing can happen until you locate the will – the original, not a copy. File the will and the death certificate with the probate court to obtain a letter of testamentary, which recognizes you as the executor, a required step before you can take any actions on behalf of the estate. Order at least a dozen extra certified copies of the death certificate; you may need more than 20 depending on the estate. You'll need those copies for a host of tasks: canceling credit cards, selling a house, transferring title to a car, shutting off utilities, etc.

**Safeguard property.** A vacant house can attract thieves who scan obituaries; relatives and neighbors can act badly, too. Quickly move jewelry and other valuables to a safe place. Photograph the inside of the home to document its contents.

**Create an organization system.** Prepare for administrative hassles to add up – duties like maintaining and selling an unoccupied house, stopping Social Security payments, settling debts, closing financial accounts and meeting tax filings. Maintain meticulous records and create a spreadsheet of assets and liabilities.

**Hire a attorney.** You and other family members can save on professional fees by doing a lot of administrative work yourselves, resulting in more assets left over for heirs. But even if the estate that you are handling is small, it is wise to hire a lawyer for at least an initial consultation.

**Brace yourself for conflicts.** Closing out an estate is more than a financial and legal endeavor. You'll have to manage the emotions of heirs, who may be your siblings – and who may be jealous and resentful of the authority you've been given. If you're in this situation, providing regular updates is the best way to smooth bad feelings that may arise.

**Carefully distribute personal items.** Allocating assets can be tense. Ensure the process is fair by putting a system in place, such as switching who goes first each round when dividing possessions. Tight-knit families can fight about who gets which sentimental item.

**Prepare heirs to be patient.** Heirs can't be paid until all the taxes and debts of the estate are settled. Be upfront that it might take a year or more before they will receive payment. When payments are distributed, you'll want heirs to sign documents releasing you from further liability and agreeing to pay their fair share of any estate debts that may arise. Don't feel obligated to give beneficiaries quick answers about how you'll handle aspects of the estate. Give yourself time to think through all your decisions.

**Find joy in mundane work...** Filling out forms and completing checklists can be oddly comforting while an executor is mourning a loved one.

**...or just say no.** If you don't feel up to all these responsibilities, you're allowed to decline. No one can force you to be an executor, and a court can't appoint you to the role without your consent.

**End on a high note.** Your final steps as an executor include paying any debts and taxes owed by the estate, distributing assets and providing an accounting for the estate to the beneficiaries. Perhaps more important than paperwork is whether the beneficiaries believe you handled the process fairly.

# Looking Ahead

## ISTA-RETIRED CALENDAR

Retired chapters' meetings are listed below. Due to concern for the health and safety of members all safety precautions, including social distancing and masks, will be practiced at in-person meetings.

**NOTE: It is advisable to call the number listed after each chapter to reserve a spot, particularly if the meeting location is at a restaurant. Some REQUIRE a reservation, especially plays and trips. All times local.**

### SEPTEMBER 2021

- 8 12 p.m., Allen County, Bandido's in Georgetown Square, 6536 E. State Blvd., Fort Wayne, Program-ISTA Updates by Roni Embry and Corey Kern, (260) 602-7174.
- 13 11 a.m., Blue River, Willow Leaves Restaurant, 326 Jackson St., Hope (on the square), Program-ISTA Presentation, (812) 593-4546.
- 14 11:30 a.m., Hamilton County, Crispus Attucks Museum, 1140 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. St., Indianapolis, Lunch and meeting with a tour to follow, (317) 877-6000.
- 16 11:30 a.m., Sullivan-Knox County, Graze 1885 Restaurant, 116 Main St., Vincennes, Program-Walk/drive option for Tour of New Sculptures, (812) 243-0609.
- 20 11 a.m., 1-F Retired, Martin's Supermarket, Warsaw, professional chef April Howell to prepare an Italian meal for us, Cost \$20, RSVP by Monday, Sept. 13, to Ginger Calhoun at (574) 952-6491 / glc74@embarqmail.com or Jan Hayes at (574) 292-6624 / hayesjt2012@gmail.com). No late reservations can be accepted due to the chef having to purchase food.

### OCTOBER 2021

- 4 11 a.m., Blue River, Farm House Café and Tea Room, 517 Bean Blossom Road, Nashville, Program-Indiana's Oldest Herb Garden, Reservations required-RSVP Harriet Klene at (812) 593-4546.
- 4 12 p.m., Posey County, Holy Angel Community Center, New Harmony, Program-History of New Harmony by Marlene Huffaker and Linda Warrum, (812) 401-6423.
- 13 10:30 a.m., Wabash Valley, Tippecanoe County Public Library, 627 South St., Lafayette, Program- "Service Dogs" by retired member Diana Koger with a service dog to give insight into this necessary companion for many, Lunch after business meeting at East End Grill, 1016 Main St., Lafayette, (765) 447-4390.

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

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## Surprising uses for mouthwash

**Freshen the kitchen.** A kitchen sink "can get pretty stinky," but a capful of Listerine or an imitation mouthwash will kill bacteria in the drain. If your trash stinks, reduce the odor by tossing in a small paper towel soaked with mouthwash.

**Clean a bathroom.** Listerine was a hospital grade antiseptic before it was marketed as a mouthwash, so try it for lifting grime and mold from showers and tile floors. To clean the toilet, pour in a capful and let it sit for 15 minutes before scrubbing.

**Kill fleas.** Simply lather your dog with a mix of equal parts shampoo and mouthwash, then wait five minutes before rinsing.

**Beat athlete's foot and more.** To kill foot fungus, soak your feet for 45 to 60 minutes in equal parts warm water, vinegar and Listerine. Straight mouthwash can be used as an underarm deodorant, while a 1:1 mix of water and mouthwash fights dandruff.