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# The Chalkboard

The Official Newsletter of the ISTA-Retired

Volume 12, Issue 1  
February/March 2024

## Retired Conference hosts variety of speakers



**State Representative Mike Karickhoff, Former State Superintendent of Public Education Jennifer McCormick and INPRS Deputy Director Tony Green**

Retirees attended the ISTA-Retired Annual Conference on December 7, 2023, at the ISTA conference facility located at Intech Building One in Indianapolis. The day started with a welcome and introductions of the speakers by ISTA-Retired Statewide Council Chair Rod Ellcessor. State Representative Mike Karickhoff spoke about the upcoming issues pertaining to legislation concerning the Indiana Public Retirement System (INPRS) and COLA.

Jennifer McCormick, former State Superintendent of Public Education, addressed issues facing public education at this time. Among the many issues public education must address is the increasing

amount of money that charter and private schools receive. The next speaker was Tony Green, Deputy Director, INPRS. Tony explained the status of INPRS stating that it is indeed financially secure. All presenters answered questions from the audience.

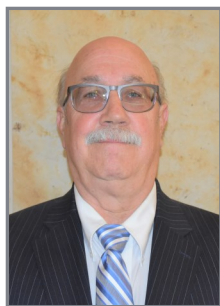


**Council Chair Rod Ellcessor, Retired Legislative Committee Chair Roger Sharp and Retired Staff Coordinator Roni Embry**

The conference ended with Council Chair Rod Ellcessor, Retired Legislative Committee Chair Roger Sharp, and Retired Staff Coordinator Roni Embry presenting information about COLAs and pensions.

ISTA-Retired thanks the speakers who graciously donated their time and those who attended.

## From the Chair



*Rod Ellcessor, ISTA-Retired State Chair*

We are deep into the Legislative Session with a hope that our retiree pension increase will be addressed by the Legislature. As you probably know, this is the short session. Traditionally the budget is not re-opened unless the Legislature considers it a high priority issue. We all consider the loss of nearly 40% buying power for those who have retired in 2011 or earlier high priority!

Your ISTA-Retired Legislative Committee has been meeting with key members of the House and Senate this session and before working for an increase. Please continue to contact your representatives asking them to provide a guaranteed annual increase in our pension.

At our ISTA-Retired Conference in December, we heard from Republican Representative Mike Karickhoff, INPRS Deputy Director Tony Green and Former State Superintendent Jennifer McCormick. They gave us a better understanding of what has happened to the Pension and what and when we might expect an increase and/or the establishment of a guaranteed yearly increase. Our attendance at the conference included someone from every chapter. Please make sure that your representatives share what they learned during the training program. This was our first year to host our own conference as the ISTA Summer Conference is no longer offered. We hope to expand the conference next year with additional programs and presentations.

The winter edition of the ISTA Advocate includes the Retired ballot for the election of the ISTA and NEA Delegates to each Representative Assembly, respectively. Please participate and show you care and vote.

As always, I want to thank you for your membership in ISTA and if you are not a member of a retired chapter, encourage you to become a chapter member. You can contact me at [rellcessor@gmail.com](mailto:rellcessor@gmail.com) or Becky Koerner at [bkoerner@ista-in.org](mailto:bkoerner@ista-in.org) for more information and chapter locations.



Retired

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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](http://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!***



### NEA members save with Travelers auto insurance

The NEA Auto & Home Insurance program provides coverage that works for you—from quick quotes to convenient payment options. Our new auto and home insurance partner, Travelers, is dedicated to keeping members safe.

**Find out more and get a quote today at [neamb.com](http://neamb.com)**

## ISTA-Retired Community Service Project

Once again, ISTA-Retired is leading a community service project to collect shoes to donate to Changing Footprints, a non-profit organization started by Maureen Leisure with help from Bob Broughton in 2005.



ISTA-Retired will be accepting donations at this year's ISTA RA at the Embassy Suites Plainfield, 6089 Clarks Creek Road, Plainfield, Indiana, on Saturday, April 27.

Bring your shoe donations to the ISTA-Retired table at the ISTA RA and make a difference!

Headquartered in Rushville, Changing Footprints distributes footwear to social service agencies nationally and around the world. All shoes are acceptable. Over 80,000 pairs of quality used shoes per year are distributed through non-profits helping students, the homeless, veterans, domestically abused, low income, and many others. There are no paid employees—it is 100% volunteer staff.

### Donate ANY kind of shoe in ANY condition

- Snow Boot • Soccer Shoes • Flip Flops • Crocs
- Dance Shoes • Slippers • Sandals • Sport Shoes
- High Heels • Baby Shoes • Cleats • Work Boots • ALL

**Even damaged shoes are converted into playgrounds through Nike® Grind.**

## Nomination applications needed for 2024 Golden Touch Award!

ISTA-Retired offers recognition for outstanding service to the Association through the years of service, starting with active and continuing into retirement. The application for the 2024 David Hanna Golden Touch Award can be found online and must be submitted electronically. The ISTA-Retired Golden Touch Award Committee encourages individuals and/or chapters to nominate worthwhile contributing members for this prestigious award. There are many worthy members, but someone must nominate them. The deadline for submission is March 1. Don't wait; do it now!

Recipients through the years —



Terry  
Tafflinger



Tom Burns



Dennis  
Keithley



Kathy Sharp



Mary Ann  
Young



Sandra Brown



Al Wolting  
Diana Singleton

### IMPORTANT RETIRED AWARD/SCHOLARSHIP DEADLINES:

- ⇒ March 1, 2024 — David Hanna Golden Touch Award
- ⇒ April 1, 2024 — ISTA Foundation Retired Scholarships

Applications must be submitted on the ISTA website at [ista-in.org/scholarships-awards](https://ista-in.org/scholarships-awards).



## Vanderburgh County



Melissa Spencer, President of the Vanderburgh County Retired, was caught by surprise at their chapter Christmas party in December when member, Nan Peach (standing), gave inspirational comments regarding the many hats worn by Melissa, followed by entertainer, Jordan Duncan, who sang a special song to Spencer.



The **NEA Retired Conference** will be held in Chicago at the downtown Hyatt Hotel, March 3, 4 and 5, 2024. This conference is open to any member and promises to have challenging workshops and speakers. Check [nea/retired.org](http://nea/retired.org) for registration and additional information.



### Recipe Corner

#### Sour Cream Escalloped Potatoes

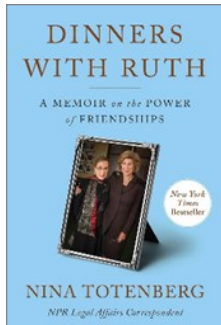
6 medium-sized potatoes	1/2 pint sour cream
4 eggs, hard boiled	1 cup bread, cracker, or cornflake crumbs
1/4 pound (one stick) butter or margarine	Salt and Pepper

Cook potatoes in skins until done, then peel. Melt butter in saucepan; cool, then add sour cream and blend well. In a 1 1/2 quart greased baking dish, slice a layer of potatoes, then slice over them one egg. Over this pour some of the sour cream mixture. Sprinkle with crumbs, salt and pepper. Start whole procedure over again, making four layers ending with crumbs on top. Bake at 350° for 20-30 minutes till top is crusty brown. Serves eight.

*Joanna Hock*  
Past NEA Board of Directors

This recipe is from the book "What's Cooking, Teach?" that was published by the Indiana State Teachers Association in 1976. Joanna commented that she preferred commercial breadcrumbs in the recipe.

## ***Dinners with Ruth: A Memoir on the Power of Friendships* by Nina Totenberg**



### **Book Review**

Just a few days before Christmas, I was surprised by a package from a good friend. In the box was a copy of *Dinners with Ruth: A Memoir on the Power of Friendships*, written by Nina Totenberg. This is an autobiographical accounting of the interactions of the author with many of Washington's powerful and high-profile people, particularly the members of the Supreme Court. The author is employed as NPR's legal affairs correspondent who covers not only the Supreme Court but also legal coverage related to the D.C. political life. She tells also of her close friendships with Cokie Roberts

and Linda Wertheimer who also worked at NPR as well as her time spent with Ruth Bader Ginsberg. The personal accounts of a myriad of ups and downs in finding employment in a man's world and her all too often having to deal with death of acquaintances, friends and family are like peeking into her home as well as her business and social life. She proved herself to be a great interviewer and reporter who could keep some activities out of the news until needed. This book is good winter reading.

*Sarah Borgman, Wakarusa, Indiana*

## **Blue River**



***The Blue River retired chapter visited the Christmas Tree Farm and Grover Museum in Shelbyville, Indiana, during their December 6th chapter meeting.***



## **Allen County**

The Allen County Chapter of ISTA-Retired met at the Acme Bar and Grill on January 11, 2024. Twenty-two attended the meeting including Sandra Vohs, Steve Brace, and the guest speaker, Roni Embry, ISTA Staff Coordinator to the retired. Each one present gave a personal introduction and told when and from which school she/he retired. Reports were given by co-presidents Sue Wygant and Sue Pape, Dorthy Epple, Jim Clauser, Sandra Vohs and Steve Brace. A collection for ISTA I-PACE totaled \$122. Roni Embry discussed the current legislative session and how members could make their voices known to legislators and keep abreast of current legislation. The single door prize was won by a member who was coincidentally celebrating her birthday, Marlena Mulligan. The next meeting will be noon on March 14, 2024, at the Ian and Mimi Rolland Art Gallery on the St. Francis University campus. Box lunches will be available prior to a tour of the gallery. A collection of used shoes for Changing Footprints will be taken.

## ISTA Staff Retired Coordinator Report

This is my first report for *The Chalkboard* since being appointed as your staff Retired Coordinator. I look forward to serving you and hopefully meeting you at one of the chapter or state council meetings. As you may know, I am a member of the Government Relations staff. We are currently busy lobbying and connecting with the legislators and their staff. This is the short session. The statutory deadline for both the Indiana House and Indiana Senate to adjourn is March 14, (IC 2-2.1-1-3). Currently, three bills have been filed to provide you with a pension stipend. All the bills involve a 13<sup>th</sup> check. Your ISTA-Retired Legislative Committee has been working with members and legislators on this important topic both prior to session and during the session. We will keep you updated on the progress.

The filing for public office has opened, including the positions of precinct committeeman and state convention delegate. This year, Republican precinct committee persons are on the ballot. Below is the link for the Secretary of State's Office to access election forms. A CAN-37 form is used for your Declaration of Candidacy for Precinct Committeeman or State Convention Delegate for the 2024 primary election.

<https://www.in.gov/sos/elections/election-administrators-portal/election-forms/>

I-PACE encourages you to become a precinct committee person and/or a state party convention delegate. Both parties hold their state conventions in mid-June. The filing deadline for the primary election to be a candidate is February 9<sup>th</sup>. If you miss the deadline, check with your county party chairperson to see if you can be appointed.

I-PACE will have a caucus room at each convention and provide a box lunch for those attending. Please email me if you are a precinct committee person and/or convention delegate. Whether elected or appointed, I-PACE guarantees a \$50 reimbursement to help with your delegate fee and added costs. Reimbursement is paid after you have attended your state party convention and have submitted your voucher with receipts. You need to submit your voucher with receipts to [rembry@ista-in.org](mailto:rembry@ista-in.org) by June 28<sup>th</sup>.

Finally, I hope that you are attending your local Chapter's activities and that you are encouraging your fellow retirees to join ISTA-Retired if they have not done so. We print a list of chapter meetings in every edition of *the Chalkboard*, or you can contact Becky Koerner, [bkoerner@ista-in.org](mailto:bkoerner@ista-in.org), for more information.

**Roni Embry**  
**ISTA Staff Retired Coordinator**

## Officially Indiana

More of Indiana's state's symbols and emblems that reflect Hoosier culture and history:

### Adopted 2018 – Insect - Say's Firefly

Kayla Xu, a West Lafayette second grader, realized Indiana was without a state insect during the 2014-15 school year. Encouraged by her teacher, Maggie Samudio, Kayla and her classmates at Cumberland Elementary researched possible insects. In their research they learned that Purdue University entomologists had suggested Say's Firefly 20 years earlier. Say's Firefly was a species first described in the 1820's by Thomas Say the "Father of American Entomology" in New Harmony. The students

picked up the torch for the firefly and carried it to the Statehouse. Lawmakers from the West Lafayette area first joined with the students to author bills in 2017. Then in 2018 Holcomb backed their proposal, and it passed that session. Before students and guests at Cumberland Elementary's gym, Holcomb had Kayla rest her hand on his as he signed the firefly bill into law.

### Adopted 1963 – Poem – "Indiana" by Arthur Franklin Mapes

The poem, by Kendallville's Arthur Franklin Mapes, was written in 1961. In part, it reads:



## Officially Indiana—continued

God crowned her hills with beauty.  
Gave her lakes and winding streams,  
Then He edged them all with woodlands  
As settings for our dreams . . .

Indiana ... is a garden  
Where the seeds of peace have grown,  
Where each tree, and vine, and flower  
Has a beauty ... all its own.

Lovely are the fields and meadows.  
That reach out to the hills that rise  
Where the dreamy Wabash River  
Wanders on ... through paradise.

### Adopted 2012 – Rifle – Grouseland Rifle

The “Grouseland Rifle” is a long rifle created in the early 1800’s for the then-governor of the Indiana Territory, William Henry Harrison. The firearm is kept in Vincennes at its namesake Grouseland, Harrison’s previous home as territorial governor. The rifle was crafted by Col. John Small of Vincennes. The Grouseland Mansion is now a museum maintained by the Grouseland Foundation at 3 W. Scott St. in Vincennes. Visitors can not only see the Indiana state rifle, but also an interpretation of territorial life and why the gun was important, and learn more about the legacy of William Henry Harrison, the westward expansion of the country and the development of the state of Indiana.

### Adopted 1996- River – Wabash River

The Wabash River is the longest river in Indiana, flowing some 500 miles through or along 18 counties and through 11 county seats. From its origin in western Ohio, the Wabash enters Indiana as a trickle near New Corydon in northern Jay County. It then flows westerly across Northern Indiana until it takes a sharp lefthand turn southward to eventually form the state’s southwestern border with Illinois before flowing into the Ohio River. The Wabash played a crucial role in the founding of Vincennes, Indiana’s first city from where so much of Indiana’s history flows. The Wabash River is also the theme of Indiana’s state song, is mentioned in the state poem, is part of the name of Indiana’s honorary award (the Sagamore of the Wabash), and runs beside

Grouseland (home of the state rifle) and New Harmony, where Say discovered the state firefly.

### Adopted 1816- Seal

Versions of the pioneer scene are found on official Indiana documents as early as 1801, when it was the Indiana Territory. A state seal was provided for in the 1816 and 1851 Indiana constitutions, but it was not until 1963 that the General Assembly provided an official description of the state seal. The Indiana seal design consists of a woodsman chopping a tree with his ax and a buffalo jumping over a log, with sycamore trees, hills in the background and a sun with 14 rays.

### Adopted 2021 – Snack – Indiana-Grown Popcorn

According to the USDA, Indiana was the nation’s largest popcorn producer in 2021. Nearly 100,000 acres were devoted to growing popcorn, particularly in White and Pulaski counties. Orville Redenbacher’s, Pop Weaver and Cousin Willie’s are all popular popcorn brands that originated in Indiana.

### Adopted 1913 – Song – “On the Banks of the Wabash, Far Away”

The song was composed by Paul Dresser, reminiscing about his childhood home along the Wabash River in Terre Haute. Dresser wrote the song in 1897. Its bittersweet chorus begins, “Oh, the moonlight’s fair tonight along the Wabash.”

It was among the best-selling songs of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, earning over \$100,000 from sheet music revenues and it remained popular for decades. It was among one of the earliest pieces of popular music to be recorded. Dresser’s birthplace and boyhood home, a state shrine listed on the National Register of Historic Places, now sits in Terre Haute’s Fairbanks Park, a stone’s throw from the river. Dresser was actually born “Dreiser” and was the older brother of novelist and social reformer Theodore Dreiser.

Sources: [statesymbolsusa.org/states/unitedstates/indiana](https://statesymbolsusa.org/states/unitedstates/indiana)  
[iga.in.gov/legislative/laws/2016/ic/titles/001/  
www.in.gov/history/about-indiana-history-and-trivia/emblems-and-symbols/](https://iga.in.gov/legislative/laws/2016/ic/titles/001/www.in.gov/history/about-indiana-history-and-trivia/emblems-and-symbols/)

## Looking Ahead

# ISTA-RETIRED CALENDAR

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.

### FEBRUARY 2024

- 13 10 a.m., Day of Action-Retired lobbying day, ISTA headquarters, 150 W. Market St., 2nd Floor, Indianapolis. You must pre-register to attend at <https://www.ista-in.org/our-advocacy>. At the "Our Advocacy" page scroll down to the second row on the screen and click on the "register" button below the *Days of Action & Legislative Virtual Briefings*.
- 13 11 a.m., CHMT, Dutch Café, Legislative Update, (765) 469-2298.
- 27 11:30 am. 1-F Retired, Palette - an American Eatery, 2521 E Center St, Warsaw, Program: Issues and Concerns of 2024 Legislative Session by Roni Embry, ISTA Public Education Advocacy Coordinator and Retired Coordinator. Lunch provided. Cost: \$20. Contact Ginger Calhoun at [glc74@embarqmail.com](mailto:glc74@embarqmail.com) or call (564) 952-6491. RSVP by February 12.

### MARCH 2024

- 4 12 p.m., Posey County, Red Wagon, Poseyville, Program—Linda Willis (Tanzania), (812) 401-6423.
- 6 12 p.m., Sullivan-Knox, Procopio's, 127 N 2nd St., Vincennes. Program: "Knox County Education – Today and the Future", Vincennes City Schools-Superintendent Greg Parsley, North Knox School Corp.-Dr. Daniel Bobe, and South Knox School Corp.-Jeff Cochern, (812) 243-0609.
- 12 11 a.m., Hamilton County, activity, lunch, and meeting to follow. Meet at Carmel Library to create a 3D item in their lab, Lunch at Juniper, (317) 809-8476.
- 12 11:30 a.m., 1-F Retired, Marshall County REMC, 11299 12th Rd, Plymouth. Program: Dawn Berry, physical therapist. Contact Ginger Calhoun – [glc74@embarqmail.com](mailto:glc74@embarqmail.com) or call (574) 952-6491. RSVP by February 29th. Cost: \$ 10.00.
- 12 11:30 a.m., Vanderburgh County, Wartime Museum, 7503 Petersburg Rd, Evansville, Box Lunch, (812) 598-1418.
- 14 12 p.m., Allen County, Tour of Ian and Mimi Roland Art Gallery, St. Francis University, Catered lunch, Bring used shoes for the Changing Footprints community project, (260) 436-2326.

### APRIL 2024

- 3 11 a.m., Blue River, Meet at Milan '54 Basketball Museum, 201 W Carr St., Milan. Lunch: TP Restaurant across the street. Contact Person: Harriet Klene (812) 593-4546.
- 9 11 a.m., CHMT, Op Shop/Glass Factory Tour, 1310 S Market St, Kokomo, Lunch-Cross America Community Center, Doubting Thomas Coffee & Café, 840 Daniel Dr, Kokomo, Possible cost-\$6, (765) 469-2298.
- 11 10:30 a.m., Wabash Valley, Wyandotte Branch of Tippecanoe County Public Library, 5542 E 50 S, Lafayette, Program: "Using Technology to Improve or Maintain Health and Wellness". Library computer technician will walk us through many apps on health and wellness topics. Bring your cell phone so you can become familiar with some that you may use to promote your own health. We will have our meeting and then have lunch at Panera Bread, 4339 South St., (765) 447-4390.

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

### Retired Delegate Elections

Ballots with instructions will be in the winter issue of the *ISTA Advocate* to elect our NEA RA and ISTA RA retired delegates for 2024 and 2025. Participate and return your completed ballot.

Every vote makes a difference!