



Volume 9, Issue 3
May/June 2021

2021 NEA Summit and Retired Conference

NEA's yearly summit was held virtually March 12 – 14 to continue to reach out to members for leadership growth and development. The summit offered a variety of options where one might choose a track of workshops to fit personal and professional needs. NEA President Becky Pringle opened the conference with her usual spirited speech reminding attendees of the work to be done in spite of the challenges of teaching during the pandemic. She was followed by Nancy McLean, an educator and author of *Democracy in Action*. MacLean certainly challenged her audience with underlying social and political attacks on democracy and in particular public education.

The second and third days offered multiple workshops. Personally, I attended Power Trifecta, which centered on communication, advocating and organizing for public education as well as for our basic values. The second one was titled SEL and the Leadership Journey. Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) can be used in both the classroom and in association work.

NEA Vice President Princess Moss challenged attendees before introducing the second plenary speaker, Dr. Andre Perry, a noted researcher and author of *Know Your Price*. To say some of his facts and challenges were really thought provoking would be an understatement...scary some would even say.

The last day NEA Secretary-Treasurer Noel Candelaria gave his leadership challenge and then introduced Rev. Dr. William Barber who addressed the group with the human touch of staying on course and not giving up. He is the president and senior lecturer of Repairers of the Breach, co-chair of Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival and a practicing minister.

During the conference, attendees did get a 30-minute duty free lunch and one evening had a dance party and the opportunity to engage in conversation with Pringle in a fireside chat.

Sarah Borgman, Wakarusa, Indiana

See reflections of individual attendees on page 7.

Retired Election Results

ISTA-Retired Governance Committee Member

August 1, 2021 to July 31, 2023

- Sarah Borgman

ISTA-Retired Minority Affairs Committee Member

August 1, 2021 to July 31, 2023

- Juan José Rodriguez

ISTA-Retired Zone 3 Coordinator

August 1, 2021 to July 31, 2024

- Kathy Parks – elected by acclamation

ISTA-Retired Zone 6 Coordinator

August 1, 2021 to July 31, 2024

- Karen Warble – elected by acclamation

From the Chair



Rod Ellcessor, ISTA-Retired State Chair

In this legislative session, we thought we would receive the 13th check as we have for the last eleven years. However, the House and Senate Conferees, at the last minute, dropped the 13th check and replaced it with a 1% cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) to begin January 2022. If you remember from past articles, a COLA can be paid from the Supplemental Reserve Account (SRA). However, there was not a good funding source to pay a COLA. To compensate, legislators moved enough money from the state budget into the SRA to pay the COLA for just the first year. The one percent will be added to your base for all future years. We were disappointed that a second one percent was not added in the second year. We thank legislators for doing what we have been asking. The ISTA-Retired Legislative team met with legislators during the session via Zoom to discuss the SRA and how to establish a permanent full-funding source. The team will continue to work on this goal. I want to thank all of you who completed ISTA's calls to action during the session. We had an uphill battle to improve the conditions for all our members and were successful on some items, including an historic investment in public schools. We also want to thank legislators for moving \$600 million into the Pre-96 fund to help pay down the unfunded liability. And I want to thank our ISTA lobbyists for their hard work during the session.

The ISTA-Retired State Council met on April 23, the day before the ISTA Representative Assembly (RA). The 32 retired delegates make up the largest delegation at the RA. We will provide you with an update on those activities in the next newsletter. The council will meet again on July 26. We have not made the decision regarding it being a live meeting, however, we believe it may be possible. It has been since December of 2019, when we held our last live meeting.

Our Retired Executive Committee attended the virtual NEA Summit and the NEA Retired meeting March 12 – 16. They provided a report of their activities to the Retired State Council. We have a story in this edition from some of the attendees.

I hope that you are staying safe and you have had your vaccine shot(s). I had mine without a reaction. Thanks so much for your membership in ISTA and we look forward to seeing you soon.



Retired

150 W. Market St., Suite 900
Indianapolis, IN 46204-2875
844-ASK-ISTA
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!



Spread some cheer to those you love with a gift of flowers!

Celebrate in May and let family and friends know you are thinking of them. Get 20% off your order from the 1800flowers family of brands, including Harry & David, Cheryl's Gourmet Cookies, the Popcorn Factory, and more. Check out all your choices at www.neamb.com/flowers.

Birch Bayh Biographer Gives Chapter Insider View of History in the Making

Last fall via Zoom, the Greater Indianapolis Chapter of ISTA-Retired enjoyed both a presentation and engaging conversation with Robert Blaemire about his biography of former U.S. Sen. Birch Bayh. Some members contributed their own memories of Birch Bayh.

Blaemire, a Hammond native, described moving to Washington, D.C., to attend college. On his first day in town, he went to the Capitol Hill office of Sen. Bayh to connect with fellow Hoosiers and volunteer. That led to a life-long relationship with Sen. Bayh which included various management positions on his Senate staff, traveling with him during campaigns and a continuing friendship for decades after Bayh's departure from the Senate.

The biography, *Birch Bayh Making a Difference*, was a four-year collaboration with the senator and is an entertaining, fast-paced, insider's perspective of Hoosier and U.S. history as well as Bayh's own family, military, sports, political and legislative histories. In the Senate, Bayh authored and passed the 25th and 26th Amendments to the U.S. Constitution – the most amendments by anyone since the founding fathers. The 25th Amendment closed loopholes in presidential succession and disability after the assassination of President John Kennedy. The 26th Amendment lowered the voting age from 21, when 18 – 21 year olds were going to war in Vietnam. Bayh also introduced the Equal Rights Amendment and abolition of the Electoral College, but those efforts failed.

After the presentation chapter president Joanne Solomon said she so enjoyed Blaemire's first-hand stories about the Bayh's and hadn't known of Birch's farm background.

Autographed copies of the book can be purchased directly from Blaemire. Send checks or money orders payable to **Robert Blaemire, 198 Halpine Road, #121, Rockville, Md. 20852. Price \$32 (includes shipping costs)**. Also provide the inscription desired, the correct spelling of the person's name to whom it is inscribed; the address where the book is to be mailed; and your email or phone number in case of questions.

Nancy Papas, Indianapolis, Indiana

Retired Spring Zone Meeting Reports

Zone 1

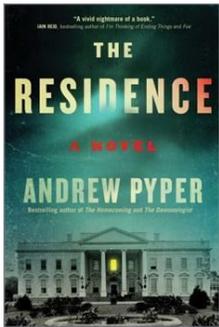
Twelve officers from Zone 1 chapters logged on to a Zoom meeting Tuesday, March 23, 2021, hosted by Zone 1 Coordinator Jerry Ervin. Much time was spent discussing the bills in the legislature which are detrimental to public education, the retired and ISTA. The reduced life dues for pre-subscribed and retired members has been extended for another two years. Thirty-two delegates will represent ISTA-Retired at the ISTA RA. Any shortfall in the ISTA-Retired scholarship fund will be matched by ISTA-Retired for the 2021 scholarships. The Summer Conference will be held in September, hopefully in-person. The fall Zone 1 meeting will be held on Tuesday, Sept. 28 at 11:30 a.m. local time.

Zone 2

Zone 2 retired chapter leaders met at Fair Oaks Restaurant on March 4, 2021. Retired State Council Vice Chair Ginger Calhoun gave an update on membership and recent board meetings. Current legislation was discussed, and members stressed how important it is to contact legislators regarding proposed bills. Those present were urged to register for the April 24 ISTA RA along with other upcoming virtual meetings. Chalkboard deadline was noted urging chapters to send articles to Jan Hayes or Becky Koerner. A silent auction was held to raise money for the retired scholarship. The fall zone meeting will be held at the Fair Oaks Restaurant on Sept. 23.

Continued on page 6

The Residence by Andrew Pyper



Book Review

The Residence is a work of fiction and details the lives of President Franklin Pierce and First Lady Jane Pierce. The Pierces are on the way to Washington, D.C., when the train they are traveling upon derails. Their only surviving son, Bennie, is killed. Franklin and Jane grieve for the loss of their son, but Jane tries to bring him back through seances, writing letters to him and stubbornly willing him to reappear. Franklin on the other hand soothes his grief through whiskey.

While the book is fiction there have been actual accounts of strange happenings. It is reported that President Truman heard banging and scratches at the door of his office door while signing an order to use the nuclear bomb. Winston Churchill was so upset after spending a night at the White House that he refused to spend another. It is a thrilling, supernatural tale about the Pierces and their struggle while living in the White House. I enjoyed the book and couldn't put it down. I was always waiting, as the saying goes, "for the other shoe to fall".

Jan Hayes, Hamlet, Indiana



Recipe Corner

EGGPLANT PARMIGIANA

2 medium eggplants (1 1/2 pounds total),
cut into 1/4 inch rounds
2 cans (28 ounces each) whole peeled tomatoes, pureed
3 cloves garlic, smashed and peeled
1 1/2 cups plain dried breadcrumbs
1 pound of fresh mozzarella, thinly sliced

1 cup all-purpose flour
3 large eggs, lightly beaten
1/2 cup grated parmesan cheese
1 cup vegetable oil
Coarse salt and pepper

In a colander, toss eggplant with 2 teaspoons salt. Let stand 30 minutes. Arrange slices in a single layer on a dish towel and roll up tightly to extract excess water. Meanwhile, in a medium pot bring tomatoes and garlic to a boil, reduce the heat and cook at a rapid simmer until thickened, 30 minutes.

In shallow dish combine breadcrumbs and 1/4 cup parmesan cheese, season with salt and pepper. Put flour and eggs in two more shallow dishes. Coat eggplant in flour, shaking off excess. Dip in egg, letting excess drip off. Coat with breadcrumbs.

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. In a large straight-sided skillet at medium-high, heat the oil. (A few breadcrumbs should sizzle when added.) In batches, fry eggplant until golden brown and tender, 2-3 minutes per side. Drain on paper-towel lined baking sheet.

Spread 2 cups of pureed tomato sauce in a 9 x 13-inch baking dish. Top with half the eggplant, overlapping slices slightly, then 2 more cups of tomato sauce and half of the mozzarella. Repeat with remaining eggplant, sauce, and mozzarella, then sprinkle with remaining 1/4 cup parmesan.

Bake until sauce is bubbling and cheese is golden, about 30 minutes. Let cool 15 minutes before serving. Serves 8. Total time: 2 hours. Prep: 50 minutes.

Restaurant Safety Checklist

Things to look for when dining out during COVID-19

Restaurants have a lot on their plate to keep diners safe. In warm months as they expand indoor and outdoor dining, restaurants will be going to great lengths to project a sense of cleanliness and safety. We all know the basics already: spaced-out tables, staff wearing masks, hand sanitizer clearly available, special setups for takeout. But what else can you do, if you choose to eat out, to make sure the venue you're going to is doing all it can to protect you?

Check the tables. They should not be set in advance during the pandemic. Your server should carry cutlery wrapped in a sealed napkin or in a bag. Shared salt and pepper shakers, ketchup and mustard bottles, and sugar pourers are also no-no's now. Instead, the restaurant should provide individual packets upon request. "That's downgrading the experience but keeping you safe," says Robert Irvine, chef and host of the Food Network's Restaurant, *Impossible*, which has recently focused on helping restaurants survive the pandemic.

Check the restroom. That's the first thing Irvine would do, even before the pandemic started. If the restrooms are clean, you feel confident that the kitchen is, too. A poorly kept restroom is a sign the staff does not take cleanliness seriously, Irvine says.

Check the menus. Restaurants should now use disposable paper menus or give you a QR code to view the menu on your phone. Be wary of a plastic menu; it may not have been properly sanitized. "We want to trust people to clean correctly, but unfortunately, over time, they become complacent," Irvine says.

Check the servers' hands. They should have gloves on. Anyone behind the bar should be wearing gloves as well – especially when handling citrus to add to drinks.

Check the restaurant's certification. In response to the pandemic, the National Restaurant Association launched the ServSafe Dining Commitment, a program assuring customers that participant restaurants are following recommended safety protocols. Look for stickers or seals in restaurant windows for the program.

Speak up. Just as you would tell the manager if you're unhappy.

AARP Bulletin, December 2020

You have a story to tell!

In retirement, you continue to shine with hidden talents, hobbies and contributions to your communities. Please share with **everyone**.

Send your stories to: **Jan Hayes, The Chalkboard Editor, 8240 N 700 E, Hamlet, IN 46532, hayesjt2012@gmail.com.**

Wabash Valley Chapter and Fall in West Lafayette



Chapter members at the Whitaker Inn (left to right): Betty Schnepf, Sonie Slayton, Sheila Klinker, Thomas Hedde, Steven Spencer, Jeanna Jones, Julia Adams, Diana Koger, Dorothy Taylor and Mil Jones

The Wabash Valley Chapter of ISTA-Retired enjoyed a delightful late fall day touring the Whitaker Inn of West Lafayette. Each of the 15 Whittaker guest rooms and suites are uniquely designed to reflect Andrew and Elizabeth's passion for travel and experiencing other cultures. Inspired by different cities and countries, the rooms are decorated with original pieces of art and one-of-a-kind furnishings. The dining room features chef Andrew food choices. Although the buffet is currently not operating due to the COVID-19, it will return when health officials and owners decide it is safe to restart that option.

After the tour and business meeting, members enjoyed lunch with a wonderful view of the fall leaves. Although it was too cool to eat outside, that is an option when weather cooperates!

Retired Spring Zone Meeting Reports (*continued*)

Zone 6

Zone 6 met Tuesday, March 30 on Zoom. Leaders of Blue River and Falls of the Ohio retired chapters were in attendance. Updates concerning the communication committee, membership committee, scholarship committee and legislative committee were given. Rod Ellcessor brought everyone up to speed on the legislative session. He also discussed the retirement COLA . An election was held for the Zone 6 Coordinator. Karen Warble was elected Zone 6 Coordinator by acclamation. Roz Fishman reported on the activities happening this year for the Falls of the Ohio. Harriet Klene then reported on the Blue River activities for her chapter. All in attendance are anxiously awaiting the time for meeting in-person!

Zone 3, 4 and 5 spring meetings were postponed and new dates are being determined.

Reflections of the NEA Summit and Retired Conference from retired attendees

“This was my second time attending these conferences. I was inspired by each of the keynote speakers whose enthusiasm encouraged us to make life better for ourselves and for public education as well. I particularly enjoyed the session on senior wellness. Learning to take just a few minutes a day to calm oneself and meditate can provide a more pleasant, active life. Attending these sessions was well worth the time commitment.”

Jim Clauser, Fort Wayne, Indiana

“The NEA Summit had excellent general sessions. I felt inspired by Becky Pringles’ opening. The NEA-Retired Conference also had great general sessions and small sessions. The session on organizing and motivation was good and certainly timely. I was impressed by the session on Robert's Rules of Order and the “Budget” session. The short sessions on stretching and moving were a welcome change of pace and we had opportunity to talk with NEA Benefits.”

Jerry Ervin, South Bend, Indiana

“I was impressed by the keynote speakers. All delivered a message that we needed to hear, but one speaker in particular was most memorable to me. Dr. Andre Perry’s message was clear that while schools have problems, the problems are community problems. Structural issues such as housing, transportation and criminal justice need to be addressed. When these problems are addressed the schools will improve.

Yes, technology is wonderful and virtual meetings were necessary during this pandemic. However, I agree with our national president – bring the hugs on!”

Jan Hayes, Hamlet, Indiana

“My experience as a virtual participant in the NEA Summit and Retired Conference was varied, enlightening and even inspiring. The sessions, attended by a wide variety of colleagues, managed to be inclusive and focused. I was impressed with self-help sessions and those that focused on NEA’s commitment to civil and human rights both in our schools and in society as keys to our shared future.

The conversation between NEA President Becky Pringle and author Nancy MacLean has haunted me ever since the summit. I am now inspired to study Dr. MacLean’s book and use that investigation to strengthen our union and its core beliefs.”

Kathy Parks, Haubstadt, Indiana

“With a plethora of great sessions from self-help to world problems, my favorite was from the Retired Conference, “It’s not too late, you still have time” by Nathaniel A Turner. Here are some highlights: Are you Miss Daisy or Hoke Colburn? Are you driving your life or are you being driven by your life? Chase your dreams like your hair is on fire! Don’t be content. We can all do more! Dreams do make the world go round. If you were out of time on this earth, would you be satisfied? Think about what your dreams are at the domestic level, global level and personal level. Establish a vision board with the steps that are needed and then do what you need to do to start your plan to reach your dreams. Live your best life! You still have time; you can do more.”

Karen Warble, Shelbyville, Indiana

Looking Ahead

ISTA-RETIRED CALENDAR

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

NOTE: To participate in the virtual meetings, members must email the chapter contact listed below and request to participate. They will then receive an email invitation with a link and instructions for joining the Zoom meeting. All times local.

MAY 2021

20 11:30 a.m. Sullivan-Knox, Merom Bluff Park, West Fetter St., Merom, Desserts and drinks will be provided. Bring a chair and a sack lunch. RSVP at (812) 243-0609.

JUNE 2021

2 11 a.m. Greater Indianapolis, Virtual (Zoom) Meeting, Program: TBA, Elections of officers. Email chapter contact, Al Wolting at alwolting@hotmail.com or (317) 456-4036, your request to participate.

3 11 a.m. 1-F Retired, Program-professional chef will prepare Italian meal for us at Martin's Supermarket, Warsaw, Cost: \$20, RSVP by May 28 to Ginger Calhoun (574) 952-6491 or Jan Hayes (574) 292-6624. No late reservations will be accepted.

8 12 p.m. Posey County, The Red Wagon restaurant, 6950 Frontage Rd, Poseyville, Program-Invasive Species in Indiana. RSVP at (812) 401-6423.

10 10:30 a.m. Wabash Valley, Tippecanoe County Library, 627 South St., Lafayette, Program – "Training Service Dogs" by Diana Koger, a retired special education teacher Diana from Jefferson High School. RSVP at (765) 447-4390.

18 10 a.m. St. Joe County, Virtual (Zoom) meeting, Program – Legislative Wrap-Up and a "Look at Next Year". Email chapter contact, Jerry Ervin at jrervin007@gmail.com or (574) 231-1924, your request to participate.