

The Slate

Affiliated with the Ohio Retired Teachers Association

Volume 50, Issue 4

May 2021

NEXT BOARD MEETING

Virtually

May 4 at 10:00

MAY PROGRAM—WHO DOESN'T LOVE JEWELRY??

May's speaker, **David Cameron, owner of Broer-Freeman Fine Jewelers**, will share with us some ideas for **re-imagining our vintage jewelry pieces** into something new that we can love. David is happy to answer your questions about "all things" jewelry.

REMINDER!!

HAVE YOU SENT YOUR 2021 DUES?
See Membership Renewal Form Page 3

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE—Susan Santoro, President

I have very few magazine subscriptions but one to which I do subscribe is **The Week – The Best of the U.S. and International Media**. They do a column called "It wasn't all bad." I have saved a few of them to share with you as I feel we all need some good news... I hope you enjoy!

- While humans are growing tired of Zooming, two groups of chimpanzees have grown fond of watching each other on the screen. Two zoos in the Czech Republic, which have been closed since December, **set up Zoom calls to keep their primates from getting bored**. "At the beginning they approached the screen with defensive or threatening gestures," said the keeper. But they soon got comfortable and snacked while watching the show.
- Eight-year-old Lilly Bumpus is used to defying the odds – first by beating cancer and now by breaking the sales record by **selling 32,484 boxes of Girl Scout cookies in three months**. Lilly was born with a rare form of bone cancer and underwent 14 rounds of treatment before she turned 1. When Lilly joined the Girl Scouts at age 5, she learned that if she sold 5,000 boxes of cookies, she would be able to go to Greece and Rome. Within one week, she had met her goal.

- A 20-year-old man with autism has a **brighter future ahead**, thanks to a handwritten letter he uploaded onto LinkedIn. "Dear Future Employer," Ryan Lowry penned. "I have autism, I also have a unique sense of humor, am gifted at math, really good at technology, and a really quick learner." His letter urging employers to "take a chance" on him was viewed 7 million times and led to thousands of invitations to connect. The Virginia native hopes to get a job in animation or IT, and in the meantime is being mentored by a local animator. "He is a beautiful young adult who wants to be independent," said his mother.

I hope these bring you joy! I have one request. **LCRTA has 4 board vacancies and we are seeking volunteers to fill these spots**. We meet the 1st Tuesday of the month at 10 AM. (Currently we are meeting virtually but hope to return to in-person meetings.) If you think you may be interested and/or have questions, please contact me.

I wish you all a healthy and hopeful summer and I truly hope we will be able to meet together in September. In the meantime, I hope to see many of your smiling faces at our **May 20th Zoom gathering**.

APRIL BOARD MEETING NEWS & REMINDERS—Susan Santoro

The board approved the 2021 budget. We had to make cuts in many areas as we have declining income due to non-renewal of memberships, very few new members and no in-person luncheons for a year. We are requesting that **life members and others consider a monetary donation to LCRTA** so that we can continue to support our community organizations and fund our operating expenses. Checks can be mailed to:

**LCRTA Treasurer; c/o Area Office on Aging
2155 Arlington Ave; Toledo OH 43609**

Did you know that our formal name is "**The Lucas County Chapter of the Ohio Retired Teachers Association, Inc.**" We urge all of you to consider **joining Ohio Retired Teachers Association (ORTA)** for only \$30 per year. ORTA has done a great deal

for all of us by advocating to STRS to restore our COLA. There is a membership form in each Slate newsletter, so even if you paid your LCRTA dues for this year, which we hope you did, you can send a check made out to LCRTA with ORTA in the memo. If you did not yet pay your LCRTA dues this year – they are only \$20, so you can get dual membership for \$50.



One last "did you know." Did you know that we have a wonderful website maintained by our Webmaster Jane Nawrocki? You can find archived issues of *The Slate*, presentations of speakers from past meetings, a membership form, in memoriam, etc. Please check it out! <https://lcrta.weebly.com/>

LIFE IN THE TIME OF COVID—Kathy Benya

As we navigate through our second year of the pandemic we are beginning to feel a bit more positive, especially with the warmer weather. To celebrate I say: **ROAD TRIP!** May I suggest venturing about one hour away and spending the day in the Lakeside-Marblehead area? My husband is from Marblehead and his mother still resides there which adds up to frequent trips. I would like to share with you a few of my favorite destinations. Please check websites before traveling. Hours of operation, admission fees, etc. *change* daily because of covid restrictions.

Marblehead. Enjoy this quaint, picturesque village. As you drive slowly down Route 163, you will see cute shops, restaurants, galleries, and churches. Do not miss these:

Marblehead Lighthouse. Due to covid, tours have been cancelled but it is still worth your while to see the most photographed lighthouse on Lake Erie. Late in May the Life-saving Station, the Marblehead Lighthouse Museum and the gift shop will be open. Remember to check online for everchanging hours of operation.

St. Mary's Byzantine Church. Located right next to the lighthouse, it is certainly worth a visit, especially if you can peer inside. Rich in Eastern European tradition, the beautiful interior is breathtaking. By the way, this was the church where I was married!

Johnson's Island. During the Civil War, captured Confederate soldiers were confined here. There is a road toll (about \$2.00 toll) from the mainland to the island. The museum is currently closed, but you can walk through the Confederate cemetery. Also drive around the island to see nature at its finest, charming cottages and magnificent homes.

Holy Assumption Orthodox Church. First, it is a very tiny church. If you are lucky enough to go inside, you will see some incredible icons and other paintings. Maybe this year the congregation will be able to continue the annual Halupki Festival in August. Interesting fact: Czar Nicholas of Russia donated some of the icons, a



chalice, and other items prior to his execution.

Browns Dairy Dock. It is not a gourmet restaurant but enjoy the best orange and vanilla cone you will ever taste!

Lakeside. Over 100 years ago, this small community formed as a Chautauqua. For 10 weeks every summer there are spiritual opportunities, educational lectures, cultural arts performances, and recreational activities. An admission fee as well as a parking fee are required from May 27-September 6. There are no fees at all other times and there are still many possibilities for a fun time. Once again, please check websites for times of operation. Updating of the website is completed daily.

Take the time to stroll on the lake path, sometimes called the most beautiful mile in Ohio. Such a great view of the islands as well as Perry Park with its gazebo, flowers and all sorts of outdoor activities. Walk to the end of the Lakeside Dock. People-watch as fish are being caught and sailboats are skimming the water. Then walk up and down the streets. You will smile as you read the names of cottages and homes, some of which were built in the 1800's.

Marilyn's and Marilyn's Too. Marilyn Burns is one of our own. She retired as a teacher at McCord Junior High and perhaps you have shopped at her Apple Tree stores. Spend some time at both stores. They are chock full of unique clothing, souvenirs and so many other items.

Slack House. This is a brand-new restaurant and has become our go-to takeout establishment. The burgers are outstanding, and the milkshakes are decadent.

Miniature Golf. Best deal around. In season, it is \$1.00 to play. Other times of the year it is free if you bring your own putter and ball.

My hope is that sometime in the next couple months, you will hop in your car, roll down your windows, and travel to one of my favorite spots. By the way, I was not paid for any of the above endorsements. I just plain love each of them. Let me know what I have missed so I can visit the next time we travel to the Lakeside-Marblehead area.

READ FOR LITERACY NEEDS LCRTA SUPPORT

For twelve years, LCRTA members brought books for Read for Literacy to our May luncheon—the last year of collecting books, we surpassed 1,000 books. Some of you may have started collecting new or gently used books to donate in May 2020 and hopefully you are still storing them. If you would like to take your books to the Read for Literacy office located in

the Main Toledo Library, they will “quarantine” the books for 4 days. Their office is open M-F, 9-4:30. If you have room to store them, we will hopefully be gathering in person next May and you can bring your books! LCRTA board of directors decided to donate

Read for Literacy

Continued on page 3

2021 LCRTA and/or ORTA MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name: _____ Phone: (____) _____

Address: _____

City, State & Zip Code: _____

Email: _____

Year Retired: _____ School served: _____

LCRTA DUES: _____ Yearly _____ Life
LCRTA (\$20 per year, \$175 Life Membership)

ORTA DUES: _____ Yearly
ORTA (\$30 per year)

DATE (today's) _____ CHECK # _____

Make checks payable to LCRTA (one check handles both LCRTA & ORTA)

Send this form & check to: **LCRTA Treasurer; 2155 Arlington Avenue; Toledo, OH 43609**

DON'T MISS ANY OF OUR 2021 EVENTS!

Memberships in ORTA and LCRTA
EXPIRED DECEMBER 31, 2020

RENEW now for 2021
by completing the above
Membership Form

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

CHANGE OF EMAIL ADDRESS *

Phone Kathy Benya at: 419.843.2480

Email her at: kathybenya@gmail.com

* **Please update Kathy** with new information

READ FOR LITERACY—continued from page 2

\$300 to Read for Literacy. They will purchase books and put a notation inside that they are donated by LCRTA and will be given away to children grades K-12 at ten branch library sites in mid-May. This is an effort to get books into children's hands since Claire Day must be cancelled again this year.



Read for Literacy Executive Director, Diana Bush, will join us virtually on our May 20th Zoom gathering to share other plans that they have moving forward. Monetary donations from members would be greatly appreciated—mail them to Read for Literacy, 325 N. Michigan Street, Toledo OH 43604

STRS FOLLOW-UP FROM MARCH ZOOM PRESENTATION—Susan Santoro

Our March speaker, Tamla Cole's presentation "The STRS Ohio Actuarial Update" is on our website <https://lcrta.weebly.com>. Also, she provided an email address for individual members to provide feedback related to the

impact of COLA and any other STRS concerns/questions: Contactus@strsoh.org. Tamla shared that personal stories or individual voices can be equally as influential as Dr. Rayfield's (ORTA Executive Director) group representation.

STRS FORENSIC AUDIT UPDATE—Susan Santoro

ORTA (Ohio Retired Teacher's Association) has posted an **update on their website** about the progress on the STRS Forensic Audit. Go to <https://www.orta.org/> and it is right on their home page—you just simply click on the big **red**

prompt. On April 7th, the office of Edward Siedle, the auditor received the requested documents from STRS. They are all on the ORTA link if you are interested in reviewing any of them.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE—Susan Santoro

League of **Women Voters of Toledo-Lucas County** publishes a directory annually with contact information for elected officials. It is called **They Represent You** and you can obtain a free copy at Toledo-

Lucas County library branches and a printable version on their website: http://www.lwvtoledo.org/files/2021_try_to_printer_2.pdf

2021 LCRTA OFFICERS & COMMITTEE CHAIR

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Secretary—Kathy Benya: 419.843.2480
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Courtesy—Pauline LoCascio: 419.779.1569
Evaluations—Doris Weiss: 419.874.2275
Legislative—Susan Santoro: 419.344.7071
Lunch Reservations—Jeannine Petcoff: 734.854.7511
Or 419.351.2601
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THE SLATE

Lucas County Chapter
Ohio Retired Teachers Association
2155 Arlington Avenue
Toledo, OH 43609

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NEED A SPIRIT LIFTER? ADOPT A HOUSEPLANT!—Jeannine Petcoff

Between face masks, social distancing, washing your hands, hand sanitizer, dining restrictions, limited visitation, and non-available items on the grocery shelf, how does anyone stay optimistic and cheerful in today's COVID challenging world? A possible answer just might be: become a plant parent.

Plants are affordable, travel well, have no lease restrictions, require no extra deposit fees, brighten any space, require minimum maintenance, and grow remarkably well, even under the supervision of a novice care giver. They have been credited with reducing stress, improving concentration, lifting one's mood, and even purifying the air. Plants thrive in a variety of environments, soil conditions, soil moisture, light availability, and even tolerate being "dressed up" in decorative containers.

Have your interest yet? To hopefully entice you a bit more, and to make it easier to add that piece of spark and cheer to your home, a list of easy to care for, pet friendly, kid friendly, and even skin friendly houseplants is given below. All the plants included here are ASPCA approved as non-toxic and safe for

both cats and dogs.

So what are you waiting for? Take the plunge! Put a spot of cheer on that empty desk, table, or floor corner. Go out and adopt a plant!

Plants are listed by the type of light needed to be healthy, happy, and successful in your home. An asterisk (*) indicates plants attributed with air purifying capabilities.

Low Light Plants:

Bromeliads, Cast iron plant, Nerve plant, Prayer plant, Rattlesnake plant, Selaginella, Staghorn fern, and Zebra cactus.

Medium Light Plants:

Aluminum plant, Bird's nest fern, Boston fern*, Moth orchid, and Spider plant*.

Bright Indirect Light plants:

American baby rubber plant, Areca palm*, Baby's tears, Bamboo palm*, Burro's Tail, Gerbera daisy*, and Swedish ivy.

