

# The Slate

Affiliated with the Ohio Retired Teachers Association

Volume 50, Issue 2

March 2021

**NEXT BOARD MEETING**  
Virtually  
March 2 at 10:00

**JOIN US VIRTUALLY...**  
Connect via Zoom with  
LCRTA friends for great  
fun & companionship

**ZOOM MEETINGS**  
Begin at 10:00 am

MARCH 18—STRS Update

APRIL 22—Glide into Birding  
Songs, Calls & Sounds

MAY 20—Program TBA

Join Us, Please  
You'll be glad you did

[CLICK HERE](#) for  
Instructions

Contact Susan for  
one-on-one help:  
[scsantoro711@gmail.com](mailto:scsantoro711@gmail.com)

## REMINDER

**2021 Dues are being  
collected—see page 3 for  
Membership Renewal  
Form**

If you receive a paper  
Slate, your **membership  
status is printed next to  
your mailing address.**  
If you receive the Slate via  
email, **Jane will send you  
an email with your  
membership status.**

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE—Susan Santoro, President

"The very least you can do in your life is figure out what you hope for. And the most you can do is live inside that hope. Not admire it from a distance but live right in it, under its roof."

— Barbara Kingsolver

"Never lose hope. Storms make people stronger and never last forever."

— Roy T. Bennett

"You cannot swim for new horizons until you have courage to lose sight of the shore."

— William Faulkner

"You may say I'm a dreamer, but I'm not the only one. I hope someday you'll join us. And the world will live as one."

— John Lennon

I decided to share some of my personal favorite quotations on **HOPE**. I am feeling optimistic about the upcoming months as many people that I care about have received their COVID vaccination and I really do see a "light at the end of the tunnel." Of course, I am realistic that we must all continue to follow safe and healthy guidelines as we have been for over a year, but now many have very good odds of avoiding the awful virus.

Your LCRTA executive board has made an earnest attempt to continue to offer our membership virtual programming. In February, we decided to try a unique and fun activity for members and guests via Zoom—a

trivia contest. It appeared that those who joined in did enjoy it! Kudos to Jane Nawrocki, Slate editor and Webmaster for ALL of her hours of work spent on developing trivia questions and investigating the best way to conduct Zoom breakout rooms and educating the entire board on some challenging new Zoom operations. [Jane adds that the Trivia Contest could never have been successful without Susan's help & expertise.] We have also continued to support our community agency partners, in fact, with larger monetary gifts this year.

My hope is that each of you will consider joining one or all of our upcoming Zoom gatherings and encourage friends to do the same. Please mark your calendars now! We will have speakers on various topics through May—our March STRS focus is very critical to all retired teachers. If you are intimidated or unfamiliar with Zoom, I sincerely hope you will feel free to contact me and I can do a "test Zoom" with you. Zoom does not cost anything and you can use your computer, tablet, or even smart phone.

Until we meet again in person at a lovely country club for a delicious luncheon with fabulous centerpieces, raffles and door prizes, I hope to see you all on Zoom!!! Please stay safe and well.

## AND THE WINNERS ARE...

**Trivia Contest:** Wanda Anderson, Judith Bashforth, Pauline LoCasio  
Jeanene Pifer, Jan Scovic

**Invite A Friend:** Kathy Benya & guest Jan Scovic

## SPRING HAT CONTEST

Everyone is invited to join in the fun at our **March 18<sup>th</sup> Zoom meeting!** Four lucky members will win a **\$10 Panera gift certificate** by participating in a **Spring Paper Plate Hat Contest.** One requirement—the hat base must be a **PAPER PLATE!**



Then attach the ribbons, flowers & other doodads! **Have fun designing the winning spring bonnet & receive a Panera's certificate**

## PROGRAM FOR MARCH

### ZOOM MEETING MARCH 18<sup>TH</sup> AT 10:00AM STRS & FUTURE OF OUR COLA

Tamla Cole, STRS assistant director of group member education, will discuss our COLA. She was originally scheduled for the March 2020 meeting, but the pandemic happened or should I say is still happening! Our Zoom meeting will be Thursday, **March 18 at 10:00 am.** Please follow the Zoom directions our president, Susan Santoro, sends by email.

Tamla Cole is going to update us about our COLA---

- The stability of our retirement fund
- The 13<sup>th</sup> check
- The COLA lawsuit
- The STRS Ohio legislative lobbyist paid \$6000 a month for the past 4 years
- Bonuses for staff when teachers have not received any increase in 5 years
- Stock market is rising but still no COLA.

On the brighter side Ms. Cole is pleased to announce the return of the **STRS OHIO RETIREE SERIES** via webinars starting March 2021. A couple of the key subjects include internet basics and cybersecurity. While the pandemic has led to increased online activity, STRS Ohio wants to build confidence and promote safety.

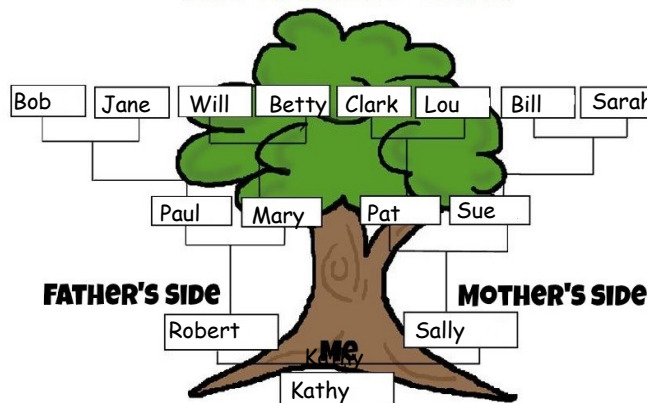
## LIFE IN THE TIME OF COVID—Kathy Benya

During this time of being homebound, I have become obsessed with learning more about my grandfather, Patrick O'Brien. He was born in Saratoga, New York in 1884. As in most families, there were always conjectures about his life. This winter I was able to determine that he joined the Army in 1914. He was stationed in Vladivostok, Siberia in about 1919 with the American Expeditionary Forces. I never knew that our country was involved at the tail end of the Russian Revolution! His next big adventure was being sent to the territory of Hawaii. Cousin Wendy (not the recipe winner), the family genealogist, actually found the passenger list that proves my grandmother and my young uncle traveled from Port Clinton to San Francisco and boarded an army vessel to join Grandpa in Oahu.

Although there are numerous websites to aid in researching family, many are not free. One of the hidden treasures, though, is the Toledo-Lucas County Library's Local History and Genealogy floor at the main branch. Even during this pandemic, it has been open, plus the resources available online are invaluable. The staff there is knowledgeable and more than willing to help verify, with primary sources, family history especially if relatives are from Northwest Ohio. From phone books to yearbooks to access to a huge newspaper archive, it is all there, and it is free. Go to the Toledo-Lucas County Library website and scroll down under services and you will easily find resources. There is even a workbook to help in getting started on your genealogical journey or perhaps, like me, become more organized.

I find Census reports to be riveting! In fact, I am so grateful for all the family information data discovered, that my husband and I both were Census Enumerators (going door to door *attempting* to collect information) last year. Start here to begin your search: <https://www.archives.gov/research/genealogy/census/about> . Records are available up to 1940 but in April of 2022 (hurrah!) the 1950 one is being released. Fun fact: While looking at the 1940 census, it seems my grandmother neglected to place my father on the list of inhabitants in their home. With five boys, I guess my dad got lost in the shuffle.

### MY FAMILY TREE



I know that many of you are far more involved with genealogy than I, but whether it is a fun hobby or an obsession, it is one more way to connect with the past during these unusual times. I would love to have you share genealogical tips and tricks and your interesting finds. Email me at: [KathyBenya@gmail.com](mailto:KathyBenya@gmail.com).

## 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](mailto:kathybenya@gmail.com)

\* Please update Kathy with new information



## EAST TOLEDO FAMILY CENTER CELEBRATES 120 YEARS!

Our March community partner is East Toledo Family Center. LCRTA gifted them a \$500 contribution in August 2020. At our March 18<sup>th</sup> Zoom gathering Jodi Gross, Executive Director ETFC, will talk of current programs during these challenging times and how they benefitted from our support.

Even though ETFC's programs have been curtailed, they are still offering some interesting programs. ETFC is providing Grab/Go and Home Delivered Meals for Seniors over 60. To help seniors get vaccinated, assistance in scheduling

and finding rides is available. With no youth programs, ETFC uses its Facebook pages to offer positive thoughts for kids and suggestions for "Super Fun Exercises." In 2021 East Toledo Family Center is celebrating 120 years of service! In support of these 120 years, individual members may make a contribution to ETFC by visiting their website: [www.etfc.org](http://www.etfc.org) (go to About/Donate tab) or by mailing a check to ETFC; 1020 Varland Avenue; Toledo, OH 43605. Please mention LCRTA as we have a long history of supporting deserving community organizations!

## ORTA'S STRS FORENSIC AUDIT UPDATE (condensed from ORTA website)

ORTA reached its \$75,000 goal to hire Edward (Ted) Siedle to conduct a forensic audit of STRS. Ted who is with Benchmark Financial Services, is a former Securities and Exchange Commission attorney who received the highest whistle blower award in SEC history. Ted has spent 3 decades forensically auditing more than 1 trillion dollars of pension assets and has won national awards for his work investigating pensions. His book "Who Stole My Pension?" is a bestseller.

Through generous donations from people interested in this pension crisis, the money to secure Mr. Siedle's services was reached in less than 3 months. Listed below is a little information on who donated to this cause:

- **641 ORTA members** contributed to the Forensic Audit

- **324 non-ORTA members** contributed to the Forensic Audit
  - **22 local ORTA chapters** contributed to the Forensic Audit with Hamilton Co. RTA contributing a whopping \$15,000! Other chapters stepped up and contributed with **Lucas Co. RTA chipping in \$1,000.**
  - **One anonymous donor**, not a retired teacher or related to a retired teacher contributed over \$1,200. Another **active OEA member** made a \$500 donation.
  - The **Ohio Federation of Teachers (OFT)** made a contribution of \$10,000.
- Go to <https://www.orta.org/advocacy> for the entire article.

## 2020 LCRTA OFFICERS & COMMITTEE CHAIR

President—Susan Santoro: 419.344.7071  
Secretary—Kathy Benya: 419.843.2480  
Corresponding Secretary—Kathleen Brunt: 734.856.3737  
Treasurer—Nancy Wiegand: 419.866.1980  
Budget/Finance—Rhea Halloran: 419.666.5718  
Community Participation—Nan Fetter: 419.885.1692  
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  
Membership—Kathy Benya: 419.843.2480  
Protective Services—Jeannine Petcoff: 734.854.7511  
Public Relations—Carol Rosebrock: 419.754.3751  
Scholarship—Paul Raczkowski: 419.351.1603  
Slate Editor/Webmaster—Jane Nawrocki: 419.861.7766  
Social—Wanda Anderson: 419.841.2593  
50/50 Raffle—Wanda Anderson: 419.841.2593  
Judy Egan

## THE SLATE

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

## NONPROFIT ORG

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## FREE GENEALOGY WEB SITES—See Kathy's Article Page 2

[Family Search](#)

[Olive Tree Genealogy](#)

[FindAGrave.com](#)

[Access Genealogy](#)

[The USGenWeb Project –State-by-State Genealogy Records](#)

[Daughters of American Revolution](#)

[Ellis Island \(1890-1920\)](#)

[Castle Garden \(1820-1892\)](#)

[JewishGen](#)

## NEW PHILOSOPHY FOR NEW YEAR—Jeannine Petcoff

The following has been circulated as the philosophy of Charles Schulz--creator of the 'Peanuts' comic strip. But it first appeared in 2001, where it was presented in Dennis Fakes' *G.R.A.C.E.: The Essence of Spirituality*. The philosophy is interesting and worth a read—no matter who authored it. You don't actually answer the questions. Just ponder them while reading straight through. You'll get the point.

- Name the five wealthiest people in the world.
- Name the last five Heisman trophy winners.
- Name the last five winners of the Miss America pageant.
- Name ten people who have won a Nobel Prize or a Pulitzer Prize.
- Name the last half dozen Academy Award winners for best actor and actress.
- Name the last ten World Series winners.

How did you do? The point is, none of us remember the headliners of yesterday although these are no

second-rate achievers. They are the best in their fields. But the applause dies. Awards tarnish. Achievements are forgotten. Accolades and certificates are buried with their owners.

Here's another quiz. See how you do on this one:

- List a few teachers who aided in your journey through school.
- Name three friends who have helped you through a difficult time.
- Name five people who have taught you some thing worthwhile.
- Think of a few people who have made you feel appreciated and special.
- Think of five people you enjoy spending time with. Easier? The lesson: The people who make a difference in your life are not the ones with the most credentials, the most money, or the most awards. They simply are the ones who care the most.

THINK  
About It.