



Greater Bridgeport Retired Teachers Association

Bridgeport Easton Fairfield Milford Monroe Shelton Stratford Trumbull

September 2018

From the President's Podium



Why belong to the GBRTA?

Upon retirement teachers are no longer members of a professional organization that negotiates on their behalf. While the GBRTA can not negotiate, it can and does serve as an im-

portant source of information about current and pending legislation that affects the interests of retired teachers.

We, along with our affiliated organizations, have been instrumental in obtaining income tax relief, full funding of your pension, and increasing the monthly State subsidy for the purchase of health insurance from local boards of education.

We monitor and protect your pension, advocate for the solvency of your health fund, and continually educate legislators on the differences between the teachers' retirement pension system and the State retirement pension system. Through our association with the ARTC, we employ a lobbyist to advocate for our positions and a media specialist to publicize our issues and concerns.

In addition to legislative issues, our lunch meetings offer an opportunity to socialize with fellow retirees and enjoy programs of interest and entertainment. We offer trips to places of interest, award scholarships to high school seniors, support community charitable organizations and assist retired teachers in times of need.

All of this for only \$1.66 a month!!! No financial institution offers such a return. If you know any retired teachers who are not members, please let them know of the benefits of membership.

Bob Pitzschler

Ready for the November Elections?

On November 6th you'll be able to vote for a new State administration. Candidates for the executive and legislative branches are asking for your vote. You'll have the opportunity to question candidates at forums, on the phone or at your front door.

Take the opportunity to ask:

- Will you support the State's contributing the promised one-third of the cost of retired teachers' health insurance to the Health Insurance Premium Account?
- Will you support maintaining the current defined benefit pension plan for retired teachers?
- Will you support maintaining the contributions of active teachers to their retirement fund at the current 7% level?
- Will you support the immediate implementation of the 50% exclusion of teacher pensions from the State Income Tax?

It's very likely that most State office-seekers won't know the answers, so you might want to inform them that:

- * In the past decade the State has underfunded the HIPA account by more than \$190 million. Retired and active teachers have consistently paid their two-third share. The Teachers Retirement Board was forced into a less desirable Medicare Advantage Plan in order to avoid bankrupting the HIPA.
- * A six member commission, appointed by members of the Legislature, is currently examining ways to attack the serious deficit in the various State pension systems. Teachers currently have a defined benefit plan. An alternative under consideration for newly hired teachers is a defined contribution plan, similar to an IRA, which would be subject to fluctuations in the stock market.
- * Active teachers contribute 7% of their salary to their pension fund—an increase of 1% in the past year. However this

Cont'd on page 2

GBRTA Trips

GBRTA has contracted with T & A Travel in scheduling, reserving and paying for trips. To book a trip with T & A, call their toll-free phone number, 1-800-967-1993, and identify yourself as a member of the GBRTA. Shortly before the trip, T & A will provide you with information including departure times and places.

Reservations and payment to:

T & A Tours
72 Northford Road 203-483-6330
Branford, CT 06405 www.tatoursonline.com

September 9 CT Day at the Big E \$74.

Enjoy the sights, sounds and tastes of the Big E on your own. Price covers transportation and entrance fees.

October 7 Brooklyn Neighborhoods \$124.

This popular 4.5 hour Brooklyn Neighborhoods Tour provides a look at famous and historic places in Brooklyn. Full sit-down lunch is included at the original **Junior's** on Flatbush Avenue.

October 17 Germanfest at Silver Birches \$129.

Refreshments upon arrival with a strudel making demonstration by the hotel chef, music and dancing, open bar with draft beer, wine and soda; family style German meal and a German Show with the Joe Lastovica Band.

2018–2019 Committee Chairs

Finance	Pat Yacovacci	203-371-7158
Health Insurance	Roz Schoonmaker	203-264-9161
Investments	Sandra Petrucelli-Carbone	203-463-8403
Legislation	Greta Stanford	203-878-8081
	Marie Petitti	203-521-3118
Lunches	Trudi & Larry Black	203-261-6576
Member Services	Pat McDonnell	203-366-2417
	Diane Harrison	203-581-9566
Membership	Ann Block	203-268-1577
Newsletter	Barbara Kmetz	203-268-8814
Publicist	Sue Berescik	203-261-5521
Scholarships	Marilyn Mitchell	203-261-4767
Social Services	Ginny Girouard	203-219-1321
Travel	Angela McKelvey	203-227-3222
Webmaster	Catherine Larson	203-482-1080
Chaplain	Lucille Baver	203-459-0708
Parliamentarian	Gloria Francesconi	203-268-4985

November Elections

Cont'd from page 1

additional 1% was used to **decrease** the amount the State was required to contribute to the pension fund.

- * In 2014 the Legislature passed Public Act 14-47 (§ 50), which in subsequent years was to exempt 10%, 25% and 50% of retired teachers' pensions from the State Income Tax. The exemptions were deferred and, as a result, the exemption remains at 25% at least until fiscal year 2020-2021. Unlike teacher pensions, between 75 and 100% of Social Security benefits are exempted from the State Income Tax.

Do you want your legislators to represent your needs and concerns? Make your opinions known. Very few voters take the time to contact their legislators.

Is your mailbox cluttered with political ads? Each ad will have a website or email address for the candidate. Ask a question and wait for an answer. If you don't get an answer send a "*second request*" followed by a third, fourth or whatever it takes for a response. At least you'll know how responsive that candidate will be to your concerns.

Your vote is precious. Don't waste it on a candidate who won't be responsive to the issues important to you.

2018–2019 Officers

President	Bob Pitzschler
203-723-8488	rbpitz@att.net
First Vice-President	Rose Marie D'Aquila
203-261-4693	eaglenest@att.net
Second Vice-President	Barbara Kmetz
203-268-8814	bfkmetz@earthlink.net
Recording Secretary	Marilyn Feranec
203-521-2432	marilynferanec@ymail.com
Corresponding Sec.	Rita McDougald-Campbell
203-459-1518	mccamp51@yahoo.com
Treasurer	Helen Scinto
203-375-1921	hscinto@aol.com

Seniors and Scams

Have you gotten the phone call from your "favorite grandchild"? *"I was in an accident and need money before the hospital will. . ."*

Or *"I'm calling from Microsoft and we have detected a problem with your computer."*

Seniors are the favorite victims of scammers who count on our caring nature to separate us from our cash. At our November 6th meeting Jennifer Gillis, our guest speaker, will introduce us to the latest schemes geared to the tendency of Seniors to be polite and trusting and unlikely to just hang up on a caller. If you have a specific question regarding scams contact Rose Marie D'Aquila (203-261-4693) and she'll see that it is passed on to our speaker.

Keep in Touch

The fastest way to get important information to you is by email. If you have an email address, please share it with us. No email? Ask a grandkid or a friend to set up an account for you and ask them to let you know when a message has come from the GBRTA.

GBRTA General Meetings

October 4, 2018
November 8, 2018
December 13, 2018
April 11, 2019
May 9, 2019

ARTC Fall Meeting

October 23, 2018

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Annual Dues—\$20

Life Membership \$250

The membership year runs from July 1—June 30. Members whose dues are two or more years in arrears will be dropped from the membership file and must repay two years of back dues for reinstatement.

Please check the address label on this newsletter. If the message after your last name is anything other than Life Member or July 1, 2019, your dues are in arrears.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Year Retired _____ School System _____

New Member _____ Renewal _____ Amount of check _____

Mail form and check, payable to GBRTA to

Ann Block 60 Ridgeview Avenue Trumbull, CT 06611

Join Us for Lunch at Testo's Restaurant

1775 Madison Avenue, Bridgeport

October 4—\$27

Ziti with Meatballs

Chicken Marsala with red roasted potatoes and broccoli

Sole Francaise with red roasted potatoes and broccoli

Reservations by Sept. 25th ; Cancellations by Oct. 1st

November 8—\$27

Ricotta Raviolo, cheese-filled ravioli with marinara sauce

Tilapia with Vodka Sauce and crab meat

Roast Turkey, bread stuffing, cranberry sauce

Tilapia and Turkey served with mashed potatoes and baby carrots

Reservations by Oct. 31; Cancellations by Nov. 5th

Make check payable to GBRTA with date, menu choice and your phone number on the check. CHECKS MUST ACCOMPANY RESERVATIONS; NO PAYMENT ACCEPTED AT THE DOOR. One date per check, please.

Business Meetings begin at 10:30; lunch is served at noon. Members may attend the business portion without staying for lunch; please call to let us know you are coming.

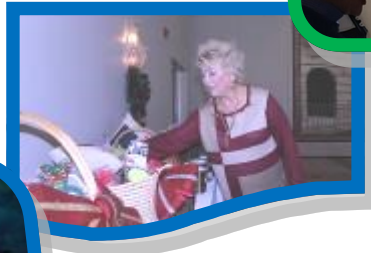
Reservations and payment to: Trudi Black

487 Church Hill Rd.

Trumbull, CT 06611

Phone: 203-261-6576

Photos from the past year!



Scholarships Awarded

GBRTA Scholarships, in the amount of \$1,100, were presented to graduating students in each public school in our eight town area. The awards are based on scholarship, citizenship, community service and plan to pursue a career in education.

Bridgeport

Bassick High School	Mike Paul
Central High School	Abigail Rodriguez
Harding High School	Amarylis Droign
Fairchild Wheeler Magnet	Jeniell Edmonds
Bullard Havens Technical High School	German Chamele-Pacheco

Easton

Joel Barlow High School	Sydney Wood
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Fairfield

Fairfield Ludlowe High School	Grace Benyon
Fairfield Warde High School	Olivia Foley

Milford

Jonathan Law High School	Kacey O'Connor
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Joseph Foran High School	Jessica Intelisano
Platt Technical High School	Robert Porter

Monroe

Masuk High School	Kayla Traggianese
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Shelton

Shelton High School	Kaitlin McGuire
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Stratford

Bunnell High School	Amanda Bull
Stratford High School	Taylor Brady

Trumbull

Trumbull High School	Lindsay Adams
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