



Spring 2023

From the President's Desk

Dear Colleagues,

"March comes in like a lion and goes out like a lamb" or is it March comes in like a lamb and goes out like a lion"? I saw my first robin of spring bob, bob, bobbing along yesterday. When I visited a garden center, golden yellow, vibrant orange and deep purple pansies were calling out hoping to be chosen to be planted in a sunny garden. I hope the impending arrival of this lovely season finds you well as we shed our heavy outdoor wear from the winter that wasn't.

COVID restrictions for the most part have been lifted and although the disease might never leave us, many of us are returning to life as it was pre-2019.

Good news from GBRTA and the Association of Retired Teachers of Connecticut (ARTC). We retained the 50% state tax exclusion on our pensions for 2022 and efforts are underway to increase it to 100%. There are bills pending before the legislature to add an additional two retired teacher members to the Teachers' Retirement Board (TRB) and to limit voting for these members to retired educators. Additionally, in the 2022 legislative session, the health subsidy for those not 65 and not eligible for Medicare was increased from \$110 to \$220. The subsidy for those not covered by Medicare and over 65 was increased from \$220 to \$440.

There is also a movement underway to address the inequitable premiums between the TRB Medicare Advantage and Supplement plans.

We have plans in place for our April and June meetings, details which are contained elsewhere in this newsletter. It is my hope that those of you who were reluctant to attend in person meetings will feel more comfortable to return to sharing a meal and stories with your fellow retirees. I encourage you to invite a retired educator to these events to introduce him/her to GBRTA.

My best to all of you,

Rose Marie D'Aquila

President GBRTA



Greater Bridgeport Retired Teachers Association

Note: It's not all fun and games. Sometimes it's business.

Before each of our lunch meetings, the officers and chairpersons are advised to keep all reports brief and to the point. This is a reminder that Sandra Petrucelli-Carbone had prepared another program that is both entertaining and informative and we want to give our guest speakers as much time as we can.

But even Sandy must follow our by-laws. GBRTA members must approve our budget and elect officers at the June meeting. These items usually take very little time **but** there is a catch. We need a quorum in order to have a valid vote. So if you plan to attend only one meeting in 2023, please make it the June 8th business meeting. **WE NEED YOU!**

We believe that you'll be pleased with the new format, location and menu which are described on page 3.

WE HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!

About our April 13, 2023 Lunch Meeting . . .

Have you gone grocery shopping lately?

If so, you've noticed the sharp increase in the cost of many of your usual purchases. GBRTA has had the same problem with the menus for its lunch meetings. When we shopped for selections for our most popular entrees, we learned that the price difference between the most and least expensive menu selections was more than \$15. In order to keep the price reasonable, the Lunch Committee explored a number of options and chose tier pricing as its "best value for the money". Instead of a single price for meals, the cost will reflect the actual amount charged to GBRTA by the venue. The prices below reflect the cost of the meal, the 7.35% State tax and the 20% service charge added to the bill by the venue.

Our speaker has a timely message.

It's spring and along with the birds and flowers there comes the urge to clean out the nest and make the home fresh and bright again. Our speaker, Dr. Kelly Kandra Hughes, Psychologist living in Norfolk, CT and a proud minimalist, is an advocate of doing away with clutter. Her presentation "Your Legacy of Stuff: Decluttering in Retirement and Beyond" will offer practical advice on decluttering while keeping unwanted stuff out of landfills.

Dr. Hughes has a PhD in psychology; quit her job as a tenured associate professor at a suburban Chicago university, and gave away, donated, recycled, and trashed most of her belongings. She currently works as the Community Engagement Coordinator at the Norfolk Library and writes for the "Norfolk Now" local paper.

And now the details of the lunch meeting.

Place: Mill River Country Club 4567 Main Street Stratford, CT

Menu Selections and Prices:

Pasta Primavera	\$ 27	Chicken Piccata	\$ 35
Poached Salmon/dill sauce	\$ 39	Grilled Sirloin	\$ 42

All meals will include salad, rolls, potato (except pasta selection), vegetable, dessert, coffee or tea. Since the price for each meal is different, there can be no substitutions. Please do not request changes to the set menu.

Details: The business portion of the meeting will begin at 10:30 am, followed by the program. Lunch will be served at noon. If you are attending the business portion of the meeting and not staying for lunch, please call to let us know that you are coming so we can arrange seating for you.

Make check payable to GBRTA with date, menu choice and your phone number on the check. Only one reservation per check.

Checks must accompany reservations. No payment accepted at the door. **Reservations and payment by April 3** to:

Angela McKelvey	273A Agawam Drive	Stratford, CT 06614
	203-227-3222	lamckelvey@optonline.net

Legislative Notes

The current Connecticut legislative session began on January 4 and will adjourn on June 7. Of particular interest to both retired and active teachers are the following:

HB5517—An act Concerning Membership of the Teachers' Retirement Board

To add an additional two retired teacher members to the Teachers' Retirement Board to have a fair representation of retired teachers on the Board.

HB6013—An Act Concerning Health Insurance Benefits for Retired Teachers.

To restore one-third state subsidy to retired teachers enrolled in the Teachers' Retirement Board Medicare supplement health insurance package.

Legislative Notes

HB6490—An Act Concerning the Election of Members to the Teachers’ Retirement Board.

To reform the procedures for election of members to the Teachers’ Retirement Board.

HB5524-An act Concerning Management of the Teachers’ Retirement System by the State Comptroller.

To increase transparency and responsiveness of the teachers’ retirement system on behalf of retired teachers.

As in the past, GBRTA will continue to monitor this legislation and will ask for your support as the bills reach committee hearings.

TRB Election Results

The election for retired teacher seats on the TRB resulted in the election of incumbents Clare Barnett and Bill Myers. While GBRTA members, Mary Ellen Minichiello and Rita McDougald-Campbell were not elected, we appreciate their willingness to serve you as representatives of retired teachers.

While both active and retired teachers were eligible to vote, it is significant that 6.59% of active teachers voted, while 32% of retired teachers did so.

Several of the bills listed above relate to the need to change the make-up of the TRB and to the procedures used to elect its members.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Annual Dues—\$20

Life Membership \$250

The membership year runs from September 1—August 31. 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. The date on the mailing label shows when your dues should have been paid. Any date earlier than September, 2023 is in arrears. Life Members are so indicated.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Year Retired _____ School System _____

New Member _____ Renewal _____ Amount of check _____

_____ Check here if there are any changes to your contact information.

Mail form and check, payable to GBRTA to

Ann Block 60 Ridgeview Avenue Trumbull, CT 06611
 annblock93@gmail.com 203-268-1577

In Memoriam

Richard Weldon	7/29/21	Antoinette Carpenter	2/16/22	Angeline Schillaci	4/14/22
Norma Allegri	8/18/21	Susan (Sue) Berescik	3/7/22	Mary F. Brown	5/1/22
Edward “Ted” Lovely	11/23/21	Dorothy Haggety	3/12/22	Roz Schoonmaker	10/25/22
Barbara Lynch	12/1/21	Lola Stephanic	3/27/22	Greta Stanford	1/11/23
Mary Elizabeth Connell	12/3/21	Linda Miller	3/23/22	Raffaele Dioguardi	1/11/23
Dorothy Von Hacht	1/4/22	Dorothy Blaustein	3/27/22	George Gulish	1/13/23
Mary Louise Kane	1/17/22	Helen Scinto	4/4/22	Bruno Goldschmidt	1/25/23
Marianne Bell	1/18/22	Frances Apfel	4/12/22	Barbara Engelman	2/22/23

GBRTA
29 Valley View Road
Trumbull, CT 06611

Email
GBRTA.org@gmail.com

Website
www.GBRTA.org

Check your name on the address block. If it's followed by anything other than *Life Member* or the date is earlier than **September 1, 2023** you're behind in your dues. Please use the form on page 3 to catch up!



June 8th General Meeting/ Memorial Service

2023's Memorial Service will be held at the Trinity Episcopal Church, 1734 Huntington Tpke, Trumbull and presided over by the Reverend Kathryn McKey-Dunar. The church is the white building adjacent to the Nichols Green and the Fairchild Nichols Library. The driveway is between the church and the library.

The business meeting and the Memorial Service will begin at 10:30 in the church followed by a brunch buffet in the adjacent parish hall.

Menu—The Brunch Buffet			Price—\$23.	
Scrambled Eggs	Quiches	French Toast	Bacon	Sausage Links
Home Fries	Fruit Salad	Stuffed Chicken Breast		Stuffed Sole
Muffins	Bagels	Danish	Dinner Rolls	
OJ	Cranberry Juice	Coffee	Tea	

Make check payable to GBRTA with date and your phone number on the check. Only one reservation per check. Checks must accompany reservations. No payment accepted at the door. **Reservations and payment by Wednesday, May 31, 2023** to:

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