



Alaska Retired Educators Association

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AKREA.ORG

Anchorage and Mat-Su

CARTA, President: Kathryn
Berkowitz

CARTA meets 1st Saturday
at 12:30 at the Anchorage
Senior Center (Sept.-May)

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FRTA meets the 2nd
Wednesday at the at 11:30

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Monday every month

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SCHOLARSHIP NEWS



Retired teachers in Seward awarded the 2016 scholarship. They made the selection from applications received from the University of Alaska

Part of being human is finding meaning in life.” So says Katy Talvi who has been awarded the 2016 AKREA scholarship. She is a graduate student at UAF. She is finishing her certification in elementary education at Valdez. Katy was reared in Hawaii on the island of Kauai. She first attended school at Cornell College in Mount Vernon, Iowa., then moved to Fairbanks where she graduated with a degree in Interdisciplinary Studies with a minor in General Education. She worked as a fisher person to pay for her education. That experience motivated her to stay in Alaska.

Her younger brother was diagnosed with Aspergers as a child and the knowledge gained in those years motivated her to become a teacher. She says, ” As an elementary teacher my classroom will be an inclusive and understanding environment that embraces differentiated learning.”

Katy wrote “The ability to shape and to nurture someone is incredible and an enormous responsibility. It is one of the reasons that I am drawn to teaching. I am eager to become an elementary teacher...I have always wanted a career that held meaning to me and I cannot think of a more rewarding career than being a teacher. This scholarship will help me get there.”

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BARB'S BY-LINE

Barb Rich will be here next time with up to the minute news and views.



Guest Editorial by Larry Graham

Common Ground's well attended forum on "Alaska's Fiscal and Economic Future," held September 19, 2015, was a fascinating, very interesting, educational, and frustrating experience for Dahna and Larry Graham, members of CARTA and AKREA. UAA's highly regarded Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER) co-sponsored the 9 am to 4 pm program at the Wendy Williamson Auditorium in Anchorage.

The first major event on the agenda featured a huge teeter-totter scale on the stage with our Alaska State budget on one end and possible revenue or income sources on the other. Some needed to be removed from the budget end and lots added to the income end (the price of oil was determined by spinning a wheel as no one knows what that will be over the next few years). At a current deficit of over \$3 Billion, mock legislators came in to make decisions about which deep cuts to take on the budget end and what income to use on the other. It took most of the current Budget Reserve Fund, Permanent Fund Earnings, even cuts in the PFD payouts we get each year, plus income tax, sales tax and other items to get that necessary balance. It was scary.

Once the audience had the picture of how serious this is, a panel of four genuine experts presented proposals on how to solve the budget problems, and the audience voted on which one they favored. John Havelock's proposal won, but it had lots of opposition, too. Next came a "debate" on where our economy is headed. It was not really a debate, but a discussion by two experts: Bill Popp, president of the Anchorage Economic Development Corporation, and Mark Foster, ASD's Financial Officer and a long-time business consultant. The picture, but only with taking the right steps and doing it quickly, was not too bad.

Then the four experts from the earlier panel were asked if they could compromise, having heard each other's proposals and the other things that had been talked about today. The compromises were not clear or many.

Finally, other than the wrap-up by Common Grounds chair Cliff Groh and Director of ISER Gunnar Knapp, Alaska Senator John Coghill, Representative David Guttenberg, and Commission of Revenue Randy Hoffbeck each gave a short spiel and then answered questions from Cliff Groh and Larry Persily about Alaska's legislature moving forward and how they will accomplish the job they need to do

The important facts and impressions we had when we left the forum.

1. The Alaska GDP will be down in two years by seven percent.
2. Twenty percent of Alaska's workforce does not live in Alaska.
3. Alaska's economy is based on one third from oil (which continues to decline in both price and volume), one-third from federal money (which is expected to decline), and one third from everything else (fishing, mining, tourism, manufacturing, etc.)

4. Native Corporations earn money elsewhere and inject it back into Alaska's economy.
5. We need to think outside the box as people of vision on what we can do in the future; for example, what about the Arctic shipping routes opening up, and bringing in technology experts to start new companies.
6. Cutting the state budget without hurting Alaska's economy will be almost impossible (cuts in jobs, sales, construction, and on and on).
7. The public is not yet really aware of the serious financial situation Alaska is in and needs to be educated, but some today expressed opposition to education by punishment (making us hurt through budget cuts).
8. Most of us agree that the budget needs to be cut, but the opposition to the specific cuts is outrageous.
9. Due to our situation and threats by institutions that rate bonds, whatever we can do to solve our financial problems in this state must be done now, not in 2018 and beyond. By then it may be too late to provide proper education, roads, safety, etc. for the citizens and we will be a long time coming back. One legislator called it a disaster.
10. The legislature must make the decisions we need to resolve our problems.
11. Because this is an election year, nothing will be done in 2016 by the legislature to resolve the problem. The legislature is made up of many individuals who are afraid to take the steps necessary to start the balancing other than to cut the state budget even more. It is unlikely new revenue will not be discussed seriously in this next session of the legislature.
12. We all need to communicate with our legislators on what we want and will put up with to solve the problems.
13. The voters in Alaska need to support accessible legislators and vote out those who won't listen.

Friend ALASKA EDUCATORS on Facebook for up to the minute news and to link up with friends you may have lost touch with. Also visit the web site AKREA.ORG for links to relevant retiree pages, ongoing points of interest and general "what's going on".

ALASKA EDUCATORS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

A member who is 'down sizing' found a stash of 50 ALASKA TEACHER TALES in her garage. We can offer these for sale at \$10 each, which includes postage to send them to you or whomever you would like to gift with these fun and interesting stories of how it used to be to teach in the 'early days' of Alaska Education. They make good gifts for new teachers in the state or for the kids who wonder what it was like in the 'olden days'. And remember, Alaska Teacher tales is available for the Kindle from Amazon.

And on that note. Alaska Educators Historical Society is putting out the call for stories of your teaching experiences in Alaska. We have a few from early days in the Bush, but would like to include more from the time of State-Operated Schools, and some of the more urban areas when they were first getting it together. Let's plan for a Summer 2016 NEW teacher tales. I know you ALL have at least one story you tell your friends and family 'outside', or one memory you reflect on when you want to remember the 'good old days'. Write it down and send it to Virginia Walters, 214 Birch Street, Kenai, AK 99611..or e-mail it to vewalters@gci.net.

IN THE UNITS

CARTA .

CARTA's first meeting of the year on September 12 was highlighted with a presentation by Luanne Jenson from Comfort Keepers on fall prevention. Comfort Keepers is part of the Alaska Care Group offering respite, personal, household, and emotional care---all of interest and concern to seniors who are aging and wish to stay in their own homes as long as possible.

During the Open House at the Senior Activities Center on September 16, CARTA members "manned" a booth with CARTA and AKREA with information on display.

CARTA meets on the first Saturday of every month (exception Dec. 19) September through May at the Senior Center Activities Center in Anchorage. Lunch is served at 12:30 PM followed by a program. More info: 907-349-1714.

JREA, Fall 2015

Juneau Retired Educators had a very successful Back to School Brunch. The group collected school supplies for Riverbend Elementary School. They were very appreciative of our donations. Our Retired Teachers were very generous. Four new retirees joined us for brunch.

We also had a good turnout for our September meeting at the Senior Center. This turned out to be a chicken potluck, many varieties of chicken, all delicious. Our speaker was Marjorie Hamburger from the City Museum. She gave a slide presentation of her summer program about Juneau Heroes. It was well received by our members.

October's program should be another interesting presentation. Wayne Jensen will have a slide program centered around the life of William Henry Seward. A statue of Seward is to be completed in the near future. It will be placed near our court building.

In November, Greg Chaney is scheduled to give us an update on the Empty Chair Project. The chair monument is up and a school teaching unit is being developed.

December's meeting will be a social gathering. We'll be collecting warm socks to be donated to the Glory Hole.

JREA meets the third Monday of each month.

JUNEAU TEACHER TALES 1930-1950

Juneau REA has copies of their revision JUNEAU TEACHER TALES 1930-1950 available, This updates the original with pictures and "what happened to.." If you taught in Juneau, or know someone who is teaching in Juneau and area, this book will be a great addition to the Alaska book shelf. E-mail Barb Potter at billstoy@aol.com for ordering information.

Further clarification about the new/additional cards sent to retirees from AETNA

From the e-mail from Sharon Hofbeck:

"Until now, (those of us who chose R+B) Vision and Audio insurance benefits had to use the Aetna medical ID card when they saw their providers. The medical card did not indicate they had Vision and Audio coverage, so there has been a lot of confusion and chaos. (Recall Audio Dental Visual Life and Long term Care are your choice and you pay for it).

The new cards will be sent to everyone who has Vision/Audio insurance so they will have a separate ID card that tells a provider they have Vision and Audio coverage. This ID card will not replace the Aetna medical insurance card—you will now have to carry 2 Aetna cards—one for medical and one for Vision/Audio. You will also have to still carry the Moda card for your Dental coverage.

In a nutshell..KEEP ALL THE MEDICAL CARDS.

WEP/GPO NEWS from the AARC52 Quarterly Newsletter

S1651 was introduced in the Senate on 6/23/2015, read twice, then referred to the Committee on Finance. There are 13 Democratic cosponsors and 4 republican cosponsors. For Alaska, only Sen Murkowski has signed on.

H.R.973 was introduced in the House on @.13.15, referred to the committee on Ways and Means.

There are 96 Democratic cosponsors and 26 republican cosponsors. For Alaska Rep. Don Young has signed on.

If you worked in a position that did not pay into Social Security and have less than 30 years of qualifying Social Security earnings, you may be subject to Windfall Elimination Provision which will reduce your Social Security Benefit.

OPPORTUNITY GRANTS

Information for the 2016 classroom Opportunity Grants has been sent to all the schools in the state. If you know a working teacher who has not received this information, please have them e-mail vewalters@gci.net and it will be sent to that teacher. Retired teachers in Fairbanks will make the selections this year.

This will be the third year AKREA has awarded \$1000 in grants to teachers for a classroom project. Each recipient can receive up to \$200. Retired teachers in Juneau and Kenai have made the selections in the past. If you have a group of teachers who would like to make the selection, contact Barb Rich at barbnroy@ecsalaska.com. You do not have to be an organized Retired Teachers unit to participate, just interested in helping classroom teachers carry out a pet project they would have to spend their own money on without the Opportunity Grant.

The grants are awarded for use during the second semester

AKREA IS HAPPY TO OFFER ANOTHER EXCITING TRIP IN 2016. WE WILL BE TOURING CANADA'S MARITIMES REGION. WE WANT TO SHARE THE RUGGED TERRAIN AND SPECTACULAR VIEWS WITH YOU .

PLEASE PLAN TO JOIN US.

WE ARE TRAVELING WITH COLLETTE TOURS



TOUR

COLLETTE MARITIMES COASTAL WONDERS/NOVA SCOTIA

Date September 19-29, 2016

Join us as we uncover the treasures of the Canadian Maritimes. From the rugged Cabot Trail to the amazing Fundy tides, fun and adventure awaits. Marvel at the incredible views at Nova Scotia's Peggy's Cove. See the four-story high flowerpot-shaped Hopewell Rocks and enjoy a lobster lunch. In Prince Edward Island, visit the Anne of Green Gables House. Learn about the region's Gaelic heritage, and experience local culture at the celebrated Saint John City Market. Be inspired by the many inventions of Alexander Graham Bell at his museum. Savor a salmon barbeque with fiddleheads. Travel along the striking Lighthouse Route. Don't miss the rugged beaches, picturesque fishing villages, and rich seafaring history of this amazing region.



You should have received your brochure in the mail in mid- October OR go to AKREA.ORG and click the link for the complete itinerary and a link to the on-demand webinar.

ALASKA RETIRED EDUCATORS ASSOCIATION

NAME (Please Print)

Last _____ **First** _____ **M.I.** _____

Address: _____

City: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip** _____

Phone: _____ **E-Mail** _____

I prefer to receive the newsletter via e-mail USPS

Dues: \$15 per year 4 years/\$50

Make Check Payable to ALASKA RETIRED EDUCATORS ASSOCIATION

mail to: Virginia Walters

214 Birch Street

Kenai, Ak 99611

The Ak-REA dues year is January –December. Any dues received after September 15 each year will cover the next year

