



# Alaska Retired Educators Association

WINTER 2013

## AKREA RECEIVES GRANT

Thanks to our State Director, Liz Lucas and President, Barb Rich, AKREA has been awarded a \$5000 grant by NRTA to help expand the association on a number of fronts.

Specifically we plan to address three related areas:

**Advocacy Support:** Currently we are facing a threat to our healthcare benefits. AKREA is an active participant on a state-based coalition and will utilize the grant funds to support our travel and expenses to these meetings.

**Community Presence:** We have the opportunity to increase our community outreach program through the development of a teacher-mini grants program modeled on the very successful REA programs in Wisconsin, California and Washington. We plan to design a program that fits Alaska's needs, offers opportunities for member engagement, raises visibility among active educators and creates a real and lasting impact in the classrooms of our state.

**Membership and Marketing:** Now that we have a website, we have opportunities to expand our membership and marketing efforts with new and current members. With technical advice and consultation from NRTA and others, we are planning to implement new strategies for recruitment at the state and local unit level.

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#### President

Barbara Rich, Fairbanks

#### President-Elect:

open

#### Secretary

Barbara George,  
Fairbanks

#### Treasurer

Virginia Walters, Kenai

#### Past President

Bill O'Dell, Fairbanks

#### Website:

AKREA.ORG

#### Anchorage and Mat-Su

**Areas: CARTA:** Shannon  
Jones, President

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

Contact: Ronelva Peacock  
(907)349-1714

#### Fairbanks (FRTA) Ellen Ayotte

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Fairbanks, Ak 99709  
FRTA meets the 2nd  
Wednesday at the 11:30

#### Juneau/Douglas: Barb Potter

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#### Seward: Mary Daniel

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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

## BARB'S BY-LINE



Hope everyone had a happy and warm holiday season. The new year promises to be very interesting. Alaska has many issues facing it this year and we need to keep abreast of them. AKREA is now busy working on our priorities.

The 2013 AKREA Scholarship will be awarded in May, 2013. The announcement has gone out to all of the University of Alaska campuses. We need your help to get word out to all Education Majors with a standing of Junior or higher. The responses are mostly from SE and Interior with few from the bush and South Central. We would like to hear from all parts of the state. Thanks for your help. The information is at the Universities or on our Web site at [www.AKREA.org](http://www.AKREA.org). Deadline is April 15 2013.

The board has been busy. With the help of Kathy Wischer (Kathy does all the work) we have improved our Web page ([www.akrea.org](http://www.akrea.org)). We have simplified ways to get in touch with legislative bills, access to scholarship information, unit news, health insurance information, etc. We would like to post information from areas that do not have a unit so send it to us and we will post it, even pictures of retirees having fun. If we have missed anything on the page, or if you have comments on the page, Let us know [akeducators@yahoo.com](mailto:akeducators@yahoo.com).

We obtained a grant from NRTA/AARP. With this grant we plan to provide some mini grants to active teachers who want to do a special project and do not have the funds. We also need to find a way to fund this mini grant so it can be used every year by active teachers. Also we will still keep in touch with legislators stressing our priorities, improving the pension for retirees after 2006, the unfunded liability, health care for members and quality education for all the students in Alaska.

We have a new travel committee. More information upcoming on trips available to our members in the near future on safe, fun and informative travel.

We need volunteers to fill positions on Committees (Membership, Legislative, Health Care, Community Affairs, Lifelong Learning) People to run for the board. We need help from all our members. YES I am pleading for help from all of you.

If we send your newsletter by email we thank you very much. We do not release email addresses. We also on occasion send an announcement such as we need to contact legislators on an issue or some new law that affects us. If you would like to have these notices please send us your email address. Let us know if it is for the newsletter or information that goes out [akeducators@yahoo.com](mailto:akeducators@yahoo.com)

Barbara Rich, President AKREA, [barbnroy@ecsalaska.com](mailto:barbnroy@ecsalaska.com) 907-687-6299

## **Does our Long Term Care Insurance plan pay for the Pioneer Home**

This is a question we have all wondered about. Mary Zalar of RPEA is sharing this with us.

Mary Zalar talked to Vicki Wilson, Director of the Fairbanks Pioneer Home regarding the State Long Term Care Insurance Plan. The Pioneer Home is a licensed or “approved” provider under the State of Alaska Long Term Care insurance plans. That said, Ms. Wilson cautioned that it is not particularly easy to qualify for or utilize the State's insurance benefit.

The State LTC Plans have specific requirements in order to qualify for using the benefit.

- One must meet the requirement for being incapable of performing two of the Activities of Daily Living (ADLs). Many residents of the Pioneer Home have no trouble with these activities. For example, an individual might move into the Pioneer Home because he or she no longer drives, doesn't want to maintain a house and yard, doesn't want to cook, etc. but he or she can still perform all of the ADLs (details below).
- There is a 90-day deductible period before benefits begin (see below).
- Residents must “pay forward” at the Pioneer Home. One is billed for the month ahead and must then seek reimbursement from the State under the LTC plan. This can involve paperwork, time, and patience.

Please refer to information below from the Division of Retirement and Benefits website, <http://doa.alaska.gov/dr/askacare/retiree/info/faqs/ltcFaqs.html> . If you purchased the State LTC insurance, you might want to review the information on this website and in your Plan booklet. Additional comments or questions can be directed to Mary at [zalar@alaska.net](mailto:zalar@alaska.net).

Information from the Division of Retirement and Benefits website:

### **What do I need to do to qualify for benefits?**

To qualify for benefits, the Bronze plan requires that you are incapable of performing two of the following five Activities of Daily Living (ADLs):

- Eating – your ability to feed yourself
- Dressing – your ability to put on or take of your clothes, fasten buttons or zippers
- Toileting – your ability to get safely to and from the toilet and perform basic personal hygiene
- Transferring – your ability to move in and out of a bed or chair
- Walking – your ability to walk without someone's assistance

The Silver, Gold and Platinum plans require that you be incapable of performing two of the following six ADL's:

- Eating – your ability to feed yourself
- Dressing – your ability to put on or take of your clothes, fasten buttons or zippers
- Toileting – your ability to get safely to and from the toilet and perform basic personal hygiene
- Transferring – your ability to move in and out of a bed or chair
- Continence – your ability to maintain control of bowel and bladder functions or if unable, the ability to perform associated personal hygiene (ie caring for a catheter or colostomy)

bag)

- Bathing - your ability to wash yourself in a tub, shower or by sponge bath

Cognitive Impairment such as Alzheimer which requires that you be supervised in order to perform the ADLS is a trigger. Certification of medical necessity from a physician is required under all plans. Prior inpatient care is not required.

### **When do benefits begin?**

The deductible period is 90 days under all plans. You must receive 90 days of covered care before benefits are paid. You may be in any level of care or multiple levels of care to satisfy the 90 days. For example, you may be in home health care for 60 days and in a nursing home for another 30 days to meet the deductible period

You do not need to receive care every day during the 90 day period. If you receive care only certain days of the week, you still receive credit for the full week of care toward the 90 day deductible.

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### **E-MAIL from an Author**

Last year "A" is for Alaska was advertised in the AKREA news. I had hoped to send its availability in, but due to compression fractures, I was in too much pain to do so. Naomi Penner contacted you and there was a nice write-up about it. Now my stories telling about opening a school in an Eskimo village are out in the second book,

"A" is for Anaktuvuk Teacher to the Nunamiut.

The Story of Anna Bortel Church

If the book can be advertised again in the AKREA, would you be able to let interested buyers know that they can also order from me. I have invested so much in getting the books published, that I'd appreciate buyers as well. I will offer a special price if they wish to buy the set. Recently, a teacher told me that she was waiting for the second book to be printed so that she could buy the set.

The books sell in bookstores for \$21.99, but I will sell autographed copies for \$23.00 postage paid. I will sell a set for \$39.99 postage paid.

Books can be ordered by e-mail or a letter.

Anna Bortel Church

1301 Fulton #253 or [anna.church@friendsviewrc.org](mailto:anna.church@friendsviewrc.org)

Newberg, Or. 97132-1870

I hope you are not having as much snow as Alaska did last year. We are having cold weather for Oregon.

Sincerely,

Anna Bortel Church

# IN THE UNITS

## CARTA

With three meetings left this year, CARTA members will continue to enjoy amazing programs, awarding philanthropic grants, scholarships and supporting selected non-profit organizations.

Philanthropic grants have been made to the AARP Gerontology Scholarship, Friends of the Library, Helping Hands for Nepal, Anchorage Veteran's Memorial, and HUGGS.

In addition to the two \$2500 scholarships awarded every year to students pursuing a career in education, CARTA is adding an additional one in memory of Nina Prockish. Proceeds from the April auction and memorials will fund the third scholarship.

Each month a designated non-profit organization receives donations from members. This year they have contributed to the Red Cross, Salvation Army, Covenant House, Safe Harbor, and the Pat Rapp Summer Fund for children at AWAIC.

President Shannon Jones will be representing CARTA at the AK-REA meeting with legislators in Juneau March 11-13.

CARTA luncheon meetings are held at the Anchorage Senior Activities Center the first Saturday of each month September through May. All educators (teachers, nurses, secretaries, etc.) are invited to attend (and become members!!), enjoy a social hour, lunch, program and participate in numerous activities. For reservations and information call 907-349-1714.

## GERONTOLOGY SCHOLARSHIP

Rosana Ebue, a senior at UAA, is the recipient of the \$1500 AK-REA and CARTA Scholarship for a Gerontology student. She is working toward a bachelor's degree in Social Work, a minor in Gerontology and a Certificate in Civic Engagement. Her primary interests are homelessness and aging. During all of her college years, she has been volunteering in several community events that involve the elderly and the homeless.

Last year "A" is for Alaska was advertised in the AKREA news. I had hoped to send its availability in, but due to compression fractures, I was in too much pain to do so. Naomi Penner contacted you and there was a nice write-up about it. Now my stories telling about opening a school in an Eskimo village are out in the second book,

## JUNEAU

Our December meeting brought in a large supply of warm socks to be donated to the Glory Hole. They came in all sizes. Children need socks too. Our planned speaker was unable to come. One of our members brought a home schooled young lady to give us some insight into home schooling. Her home school teacher is a member of JREA. The young lady is now back in the public school system. It was interesting to hear reasons for doing home schooling.

January and February are our luncheon months. We meet at the Baranof Hotel. They generously provide us with a private room and we are able to order off the menu. In January we had a report from Marie Darlin regarding the survey on needs for the aging population in Juneau. This survey was taken in 2010. Much time and effort has gone into compiling the information. It will soon be presented to the Assembly. Marie also gave us a brief explanation of some of the bills already filed for our current legislative session. Marie is a woman of many talents.

In February we will be having our legislators or representatives from their offices. We only have three so it is a doable thing for us. We hope to get a status report on some of the education issues. .Senator Dennis Egan is still working on getting a choice for retirement benefits for new hires. This passed the Senate last session but stalled in the House.

In March we will be having the AKREA Board meet in Juneau. Jim Puckett, head of Retirement and Benefits will be a speaker at this meeting.

Our group is small but we have some very faithful, hard workers.



Tristan Weissmuller, a 12yr. old student, spoke on her experience of being schooled at home with JREA member, Myrna Allen, as her tutor/home school

JREA member, Myrna Allen, husband Willy, members Louise Dawson and Liz Lucas at Dec. 2012 meeting







## COLLETTE TRAVEL PLANS

### **MAKING TRAVEL PLANS.....**

**AKREA is busily making plans to partner with Collette Tours for a 2014 trip. We are so excited! As members, we will keep you in the loop as plans progress.**

**Traveling with AKREA/Collette Tours as a group will offer many advantages. One advantage is that we will be privy to many “unpublished” packages that do not appear in any brochures or on the website. This gives us a coveted benefit!**

**We will be looking for other benefits as we put our travel package together. Keep checking our website, [www.akrea.org](http://www.akrea.org), for updates. We will be in touch.**

**Oh, by the way, if you haven’t joined AKREA yet, check us out on the web...we have made it SO easy. Liz Lucas, Executive Director**

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The AKREA Board will meet in Juneau on March 1 & 12. A business meeting will be held at Fireweed Place on Monday beginning at 9 a.m. In the afternoon, officials representing Alaska Care will speak to the group and answer questions of concern to the members.

If you are in Juneau or will be, plan to join us on Monday. If you have a question for the insurance people, Including Long Term Care, e-mail it to AKEDUCATORS@YAHOO.COM and we will be sure to ask, and get the answer to you.

On Tuesday the Board will meet with the Legislators to voice our opinion on issues of concern to retirees and education.

## **ALASKA FUNDS SHINGLES SHOT FOR RESIDENTS**

Last year the State of Alaska Legislature appropriated money to fund a program that would provide low cost vaccinations for flu, shingles, and dtap (diphtheria/tetanus/pertussis). This program was intended for those Alaskan residents who were considered underinsured. This program was not written specifically for State retirees, but for Alaskan residents who have no insurance or insurance that won't cover these wellness vaccinations. The program is administered through the State of Alaska Dept. of Health & Social Services in the State of Alaska.

It just so happened that State of Alaska retirees' medical plans do not cover wellness vaccinations. Under the criteria set when this bill was written and passed by the Legislature, State retirees fell into the underinsured category. Since the bill's requirement was that one had to be 1) an Alaskan resident, and 2) had to fall into the underinsured category, State retirees qualified to get the vaccinations.

**This is a program for all Alaskan residents who qualify, and does not apply to those who are not Alaskan residents.**

There was some speculation when this first came out last year that it would cover anyone who had AlaskaCare whether they lived here or not. The bill specifically says, though, that this program covers adults and children who reside in the State, and having AlaskaCare didn't really have anything to do with it. Some folks thought that if you had AlaskaCare, weren't a resident of Alaska but happened to be in Alaska visiting or vacationing, you could still get the shots through this program while you were in Alaska. Last year's funding was a reinstatement of a previous program that Alaska had that was partially—or fully—federally funded, and the federal funding had stopped. Last year the Legislature decided to reinstate the program with State money temporarily and then evaluate what the need was so they could decide if it's something that they should continue.

If someone wanted to find out if there was something similar in their state, contact the Dept. of Health and Social Services, and ask if there is a program for low cost vaccinations, and what the criteria is for being able to get them



## IN MEMORIAM

PEARL LASKA CHAMBERLAIN was a Life member of AKREA. She passed on Thanksgiving Day in Nashville, Tennessee at the age of 103. Besides being an active retired educator, Pearl was a pioneer Aviatrix and a WASP. She retired from teaching in 1972.

WILLA FREY taught at Chena School on Fort Wainwright. She passed on November 29 at age 83.

MARY KERNER taught fourth grade on Fort Wainwright for 20 years. She passed in December

JAMES MATTHEWS passed on January 28, 2013. He retired from the University of Alaska, Fairbanks and was an active community volunteer

NORMA LARSEN passed away early in February. Services will be held later. She was a retired Fairbanks teacher.

ARNOLD GRIESE passed away February 1 at age 91. He taught in Tanana and was a professor at UAF, He wrote 2 textbooks and four children's books with an Alaskan setting.

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## FINANCIAL REPORT 2012

### INFLOWS

Dues 5,525.00  
Invest Inc. 11.96

TOTAL INFLOWS 5,536.96

Checking account balance \$19,431.59

Premium Savings 5015.98

Regular savings 551.14

### OUTFLOWS

Computer 194.27  
Convention 284.00  
Credit Card Payback 1,230.10  
Donation 750.00  
Membership Fee 100.00  
Postage 123.71  
Printing & Mailing 4,149.21  
Scholarship 2,000.00  
Internet 1,930.00

TOTAL OUTFLOWS 10,761.29

OVERALL TOTAL -5,224.33

Operating Income is derived exclusively from membership dues. The Premium savings account is a dedicated account for scholarships, and is the result of a bequest from a deceased member. The interest from that account has, in the past, garnered enough income to pay the scholarship without tapping the principal but currently is generating only .35%. For that reason, the board made the decision to put it in an investment account with Schwab. It was transferred there in July 2012

**MEMBERSHIP IN THE ALASKA RETIRED EDUCATORS ASSOCIATION**

**NAME (Please Print)**

**Last** \_\_\_\_\_ **First** \_\_\_\_\_ **M.I.** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**City:** \_\_\_\_\_ **State:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_ **E-Mail** \_\_\_\_\_

**Dues are \$15 per year or 4 years for \$50**

**I prefer to receive the newsletter via  e-mail  USPS**

**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