



# THE BELLRINGER

Newsletter of the Lake County Retired Teachers Association

Volume 59 No. 4

August, 2023

## From the President.....

As the school year approaches I find myself wondering how you feel about a new school year? Do you miss it and feel like you need another purpose? Are you thrilled to be finished with teaching or do you want to reinvent yourself in some way?

I know that teachers in our association have been retired for different amounts of time and have taught for varying amounts of time so the answers will be different based on that and many other variants.

There certainly are enough reminders that schools will be in session soon: sports teams beginning practice for fall sports, ads on TV for clothes, supplies, and collections of back to school gear for disadvantaged children. How do you feel when you see these reminders?

I know every summer I would take classes or collect items or packets for lessons and make the trip to the school supply stores to aid in my students' learning. As soon as it was fourth of July I would start arranging things I had bought and start thinking forward to the start of school, making nametags when I had a list and figuring out seating plans, until I met the students and would immediately change the plan. How do you feel now? *Cathy Trepal, President*

## Voters YES—Vouchers NO

*Tom Moscovic-Legislative Chair*

### Voters in Ohio Reject Issue 1 That Would Have Made it Tougher to Change the Ohio Constitution

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) Ohio voters on Tuesday resoundingly rejected a Republican-backed measure that would have made it more difficult to change the state's constitution, setting up a fall campaign that will become the nation's largest referendum on abortion rights since the U.S. Supreme Court overturned nationwide protections last year. The defeat of Issue 1 keeps in place a simple majority threshold for passing future constitutional amendments. It would have raised that to a 60% supermajority, which supporters said would protect the state's foundational document from outside interest groups.

While abortion was not directly on the special election ballot, the result marks the latest setback for Republicans in a conservative-leaning state who favor imposing tough restrictions on the procedure. Ohio Republicans placed the question on the summer ballot in hopes of undercutting a citizen initiative voters will decide in November that seeks to enshrine abortion rights in the state.

Dennis Willard, a spokesperson for the opposition campaign, One Person One Vote, called Issue 1 a "deceptive power grab" that was intended to diminish the power of the state's voters. "Tonight is a major victory for democracy in Ohio," Willard told a jubilant crowd at the oppositions campaign watch party. "The Majority still rules in Ohio."

A major national group that opposes abortion rights, Susan B. Anthony Pro-Life America, called the result "a sad day for Ohio" while criticizing the outside money that helped the opposition. In fact, both sides relied on national groups and individuals in their campaigns. Other states where voters have considered abortion rights since last year's Supreme Court ruling have protected them, including in red states such as Kansas and Kentucky.



**LCRTA Luncheon/Meeting**  
**September 12, 2023**  
**11:00pm**

**Mentor Methodist Church**  
8600 Mentor Avenue, Mentor  
Program:  
Cathi Weber

"Ghost Stories of Haunted Willoughby"

See registration form page 3

Reservations received by September 1, 2023

### **Please Note:**

The incorrect dates for the Cape May trip were printed in the yearbook.

The correct dates are:

**November 28-December 2, 2023.**

*Correction from Bonnie Lillibridge, Charleen Langer*

Legislative continued...

### **It'll Cost Taxpayers Billions of Dollars,' Ohio Budget Impacts Public School Funding Payers**

DAYTON, Ohio (WDTN)--Ohio Governor Mike DeWine has signed the state's budget for the next two years into law, saying it focuses on new opportunities for jobs and economic development, education initiatives and support for mothers and children. The budget has raised the base pay for Ohio teachers from \$30,000 to \$35,000. Additionally, it has pledged more than one billion dollars to public education and draws new guidelines for the state's school voucher program. However, the budget is leaving education leaders in the state divided on whether this plan is the best path forward.

Scott DiMauro, president of the Ohio Education Association, said that while there are pros to the new budget, such as \$500 million going towards public schools' baseline education, there are some questionable aspects as well. "This was a mixed budget, but this expansion of vouchers to people, even including millionaires, really was something that puts a damper on the whole thing overall," Scott DiMauro said "You have to ask the question, why is it that people who have already been sending their kids to private schools need a subsidy from the state of Ohio, essentially a government handout to reward them for their choice.

With the new Ohio budget, a family of four making \$135,000 a year qualifies for a full scholarship to a private or parochial school. That's 450% of the federal poverty level, according to the Ohio Capital Journal. Every student in the state will be eligible for a scholarship that pays at least 10% of the maximum scholarship, no matter what the family makes each year, which is something Dayton Christian School leaders say parents have been asking for and helps all students regardless of economic status.

"I don't think it is necessarily about rich or poor, because up to a couple of years ago, the focus of the voucher system was actually to get students out of low performing districts," Matt Baker, head of Dayton Christian School said.

"Some of those in a lower socio-economic area are into different entities that are performing higher. Now they've just expanded that, giving parents more opportunity, more choice to use their dollars where they see fit."

With the expansion of the voucher program, private schools say they are awaiting the full details on how this expansion will work and when exactly it will take effect.

#### **Education Report-Ohio Budget Effecting Education**

- OFT, NEA and Policy Matters Ohio praised increases in state funding phased-in from the Fair School Funding Plan.
- "Near" universal private school eligibility-\$135,000 for family of four.
- \$6,165 for K-8, \$8,407 for High School

- Scholarships will be adjusted based on family income.
- Senate Pres. Matt Huffman said, "Every student in Ohio will be eligible for a scholarship regardless of income."
- Teacher's unions are worried that this is a voucher "scheme" that will give more \$ to private schools over time and less to public schools.
- School lunch program—districts will be reimbursed for free and reduced breakfasts and lunches as long as they are a part of the National School Breakfast or Lunch Program.



#### **COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION.....**

*By Louise Bennet*

I hope many of you will be able to help LCRTA support **Project Hope** at our September luncheon meeting. The hard working folks and volunteers there **hope** so too. A list of the most immediate needs is shown below:

- |                                    |               |
|------------------------------------|---------------|
| 10-12oz. styrofoam coffee cups     | Bottled Water |
| Mixed fruit cups                   | Toilet paper  |
| Coffee-regular and decaf           | Lunch chips   |
| Garbage bags-13 and 33 gallon size |               |
| Gift Cards-                        |               |

Giant Eagle, Meijer, Walmart, Sam's Club, Home Depot Project Hope for the Homeless, located here in Lake County, gives **hope** and could use our help in providing that **hope** to others in need.

Also, please remember to add your volunteer hours from June through August. If you have not kept track of the times, estimated totals are acceptable. This information can be mailed or emailed to me; or forms will be available at the next meeting.\*\*

We continue to collect the pull tabs from aluminum beverage cans to be forwarded to Ronald McDonald House.

**\*\* Please find tear-off for Volunteer Hours on the on page 4 of this newsletter.**



Our condolences to the families of  
**Miriam Neal**  
**Rose Marie Sezon**

LCRTA Luncheon Reservation **DUE Friday, September 1, 2023**

Please cut out and return this reservation form with payment to:

**No reservations accepted after September 1, 2023**

Karen Sawitke  
9399 Ridgeside Drive  
Mentor, Ohio 44060  
440.255.0764

**Make all checks payable to LCRTA  
\$16.50 per person**

Please reserve \_\_\_\_ (s) for the Tuesday, September 12, 2023 LCRTA luncheon

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Please list names of all attending on this line

Amount enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

Lunch: (Choose 1) \_\_\_\_\_ Chicken Salad Wrap \_\_\_\_\_ Grilled Vegetable Wrap  
Garden Pasta Salad, Assorted Cookies, Coffee, Water

(If there will be more than 1 person on this reservation, please indicate who will be having each meal)

**PLEASE NOTE NEW NAME AND ADDRESS FOR SENDING YOUR RESERVATION**



"Ghosts of Haunted  
Willoughby"

Will be presented by  
Cathi Weber at the September  
12, 2023 Luncheon/meeting.

Cathi, 1986 graduate of Eastlake North High School has been fascinated with the paranormal for years, not only speaking to groups on the subject, writing a book, Haunted Willoughby, Ohio and leading groups on the very popular Willoughby Ghost Walk. (see our Social Travel page for our very own specially guided walk on September 14, 2023.

Cathi will bring energy and knowledge as well as a strong dose of humor to her program. She will highlight historically significant buildings detailing paranormal activity along with STORIES-LEGENDS-LORE. This is a don't miss program.

*Connie Irvin, Programs*

**PLEASE HELP US KEEP UP TO DATE!**

Are you planning on moving or have you already moved?  
Do you have a new cell phone or land line number?

If you can answer "YES" to either or both of these questions, please email or give us a call with your new information—  
440-255-0764 or [sawitke@oh.rr.com](mailto:sawitke@oh.rr.com)

*Informative & Protective Services*

*by Janene Ishee*

**Medicare & You 2023 re: Vaccines**

As busy as we all are, it's still important to stay current with vaccinations. Here is a list of vaccines that are covered by Medicare.

Regarding shots (or Vaccines) Part B covers **Flu** shots, **Hepatitis B** shots, **Pneumococcal** shots and **COVID19** vaccine. **COVID19** coverage could continue to change as the public health emergency ends. Check with your health-care provider if you have any questions or concerns.

Part D (Medicare drug coverage) generally covers all other recommended adult immunizations (like **shingles**, **tetanus**, **diphtheria** and **pertussis vaccines**).

If you are unsure about coverage or you are not yet covered by Medicare through STRS, call the STRS Member Services number on the back of your medical card to confirm coverage.

The Aetna Manual provides a page so that you are able to search for new/current information on your health care benefits. Please go to: [STRS.AetnaMedicare.com](https://www.aetna.com/medicare) if you have concerns or questions.

**LCRTA Social/Travel Committee is seeking one or two members to help in planning future trips. If you are interested, please contact one of the current members of the committee or email to:**

**[oh.lcrtasoctrav@gmail.com](mailto:oh.lcrtasoctrav@gmail.com)**



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A Publication of the  
LAKE COUNTY RETIRED  
TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

LCRTA

9399 Ridgeside Drive  
Mentor, Ohio 44060

Website

<https://lakecountyrta.weebly.com>



STATE TEACHERS  
RETIREMENT SYSTEM  
OF OHIO

Volunteer Hours Sheet for the months of  
June—August, 2023

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone# \_\_\_\_\_

Volunteer Hours: \_\_\_\_\_

**Cut Out and Mail to:**

Louise Bennet  
7995 Burgundy Court  
Painesville, Ohio 44077

OR Email to:  
[bnlbennet@yahoo.com](mailto:bnlbennet@yahoo.com)

OR Bring to the next luncheon-September 12, 2023  
LCRTA



## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

September 12, 2023 Luncheon/Meeting  
Mentor Methodist Church  
11:00AM

September 14, 2023 Ghost Walk of  
Willoughby 7:30 PM  
(See Social/Travel page)

September 20, 2023 Pre-Cruise Meeting for European  
River Cruise  
Mentor Public Library—1:30PM  
Garfield Room

November 14, 2023 Luncheon/Meeting  
TBA

November 16, 2023 Informational Trip Meeting  
Mentor Public Library—1:30PM  
Garfield Room

## 2023 - 2024 SOCIAL/TRAVEL CALENDAR

**September 14, 2023 - Ghost Walk of Willoughby**

**September 20, 2023 – Pre-Cruise Meeting – Riverboat Cruise**

**October 6-21, 2023 - European Riverboat Cruise (GCT)**

**November 16, 2023 – Informational Meeting – Mentor Library**

**November 28 thru December 2, 2023 - Christmastime in Cape May**

**October 10-19(20), 2024 – Hawaiian Cruise Vacation**

### SOCIAL/TRAVEL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Gail Allcock, Sherry Barbieri, Kathleen Kling, Lynn Miller, Sherry Niederkorn, Sarah Reinhard

IF YOU HAVE SUGGESTIONS FOR TRIPS, PLEASE CONTACT A COMMITTEE MEMBER  
OR SEND AN EMAIL TO OUR EMAIL ADDRESS: [oh.lcrtasotrav@gmail.com](mailto:oh.lcrtasotrav@gmail.com)

ALL FLIERS AND REGISTRATION FORMS ARE ON THE LCRTA WEBSITE:

[www.lakecountyrta.weebly.com](http://www.lakecountyrta.weebly.com)

Please check the LCRTA website for any changes.

**PLEASE MAKE ALL CHECKS PAYABLE TO “L.C.R.T.A.” UNLESS SPECIFIED OTHERWISE!!**

**PHONE OR EMAIL THE PERSON IN CHARGE WHEN YOU MAIL YOUR CHECK!!**

(Sometimes letters get lost in the mail.)

### **Thursday, September 14, 2023 - Ghost Walk of Willoughby (One day trip)**

At our September General Membership Meeting, members will be treated to the presentation by Cathi Weber on "Haunted Willoughby." As a follow up to this presentation, there will be a Ghost Walk throughout haunted historic downtown Willoughby. Hear ghostly tales and frightening legends on the Thursday evening following the luncheon meeting! This guided, lantern-lit tour follows darkened pathways past apparitions and murderous mysteries, as we explore stories of grave robbers and much more. The tour will last slightly under 2 hours. Cost is \$18 Adults, \$9 Kids (6 to 12 yrs), free for 5 yrs and younger. **Meet at 7:30 PM at 36 Public Square in downtown Willoughby. Reservations due by September 7, 2023.** Contact Gail Allcock 440-477-6830 or [gailallcock@gmail.com](mailto:gailallcock@gmail.com).

### **Wednesday, September 20, 2023 – Pre-Cruise Meeting for European River Cruise**

This meeting will be held in the **Garfield Room** (basement level) at **Mentor Public Library** at **1:30 PM**. Those who are signed up for this trip will receive all the information needed for a successful experience. Contact Sherry Niederkorn at [sherry.niederkorn23@gmail.com](mailto:sherry.niederkorn23@gmail.com) or 440-477- 1198 if unable to attend.

### **Thursday, November 16, 2023 – Informational Trip Meeting – Mentor Public Library**

This is your opportunity to hear the 2024 Trip Schedule and get all the information about each trip we have planned for the coming year. This meeting will be held in the **Garfield Room** (basement level) at **Mentor Public Library** at **1:30 PM**. Wendy Miller from Nowak Tours will also be there to discuss the Hawaiian adventure. We look forward to seeing you.

## **November 28 thru December 2, 2023 - Cape May at Christmastime**

A motorcoach tour with Great Day! Tours. Celebrate the best of Cape May at Christmastime, with its gaslit streets, musicians and carolers; guests can visit Victorian homes, inns, and churches. The city is located at the southern tip of the Cape May Peninsula in New Jersey where the Delaware Bay meets the Atlantic Ocean. Highlights of this tour include the Physick Family Christmas House, a Cape May trolley tour of the Historic District, and a visit to the Carroll Gallery. Included also will be a winery tour and a presentation on Cape May's Christmas Traditions. Breakfast and dinner are included daily. A return stop in Lancaster, PA will be made for dinner and the show, "A Christmas Carol, The Musical". The next day we attend a matinee performance of "The Miracle of Christmas" and then depart for home. The cost is \$1684 per person (double) and \$2084 per person (single). **Deadline for any new reservation is Sept. 7, 2023. Final payment is due Oct. 15, 2023.** Twenty seats are being held for LCRTA. Contact is Sarah Reinhard at 440-567-9515 or [swreinhard4@yahoo.com](mailto:swreinhard4@yahoo.com). See LCRTA website for flier and registration form.

## **October 10 thru 19(20), 2024 - Visit to Hawaii with cruise (11-day trip)**

Join us as we discover the beauty, culture and history of the Hawaiian Islands on this Hawaiian Cruise Tour with Nowak Tours. Spend two nights on Waikiki Beach then board Norwegian Cruise Line's The Pride of America. Relax on board your floating resort as you sail from island to island while the ship's attentive staff is available to ensure that your journey is an enjoyable one. Add the annual migration of the North American Humpback whales from the cold waters of Alaska to the warm waters of Hawaii and you have truly experienced PARADISE.

Trip includes roundtrip airfare to Honolulu, all airport transfers, 2-night lodging on Waikiki Beach, 7-night cruise on the Pride of America in selected cabin type, 6 private shore excursions (including Pearl Harbor, the USS Arizona, USS Missouri, Iao Valley, Volcanoes National Park, Macadamia Nut Factory, Kona coffee plantation, Waimea Canyon, Grand Circle Island Tour – and more). Tour pricing also includes all port charges, taxes & fees, all onboard meals with 24-hour room service on the Pride of America, and all gratuities for baggage handling, drivers, and local guides. **PRICING:** (To view staterooms, visit their website at <https://www.ncl.com/cruise-ship/pride-of-america>) Inside Stateroom: \$5,149, Outside stateroom (picture window): \$5,679 Balcony stateroom: \$5,949

**Payment Policy:** A \$500 deposit per person is due to secure your reservation and no later than February 9, 2024. Final payment is due no later than June 14, 2024. Optional trip cancellation/interruption insurance is available at \$373 (for all stateroom categories) and is strongly recommended. The Insurance premium is due with your deposit and is fully refundable up to the final payment date. Please make your check payable to "Nowak Tours" and send to **Nowak Tours, 1395 Barn Run Drive, Valley City, Ohio 44280**. You can also pay by credit/debit card (no additional fees) by calling Nowak Tours at 330-483-4900. Contact Sherry Niederkorn with questions at 440-477-1198 or [sherry.niederkorn23@gmail.com](mailto:sherry.niederkorn23@gmail.com) to let her know that you are interested.

## **YOUR SOCIAL /TRAVEL COMMITTEE**

We are looking for one or two members to join the Social/Travel Committee to help us plan our future trips. If you love to travel and are interested, please contact one of us, or email us at [oh.lcrtasotrav@gmail.com](mailto:oh.lcrtasotrav@gmail.com).