

Connections



September 2013

The Atlanta Experience

by Eddie Fifer

"Not too hot, but more rain than not" were the conditions for our ten days in Atlanta as the NEA-Retired and the NEA held their conventions this summer. Rest assured that our VEA-Retired interests were well represented at these events. Pat Kennedy, VEA-R President, headed the outstanding team of delegates, including Ralph Booher, Dennis Pfennig, Debbie Jessee, and Eddie Fifer.

Martha Wood was the NEA-R Elections Chairperson and conducted all of the retired elections. She was in charge of the voting which took place over two days. Her assistants were from all across the country, including our own "not yet retired", Ann Johnson.

Katherine Hairston attended the NEA-R meeting and was a mic monitor at the NEA Convention. Debbie Jessee also represented us at the annual NEA Outreach to Teach project.

At the NEA-Retired Annual Meeting, there is never a dull moment. Despite our age, there is always heated debate. Besides the secret

ballot voting for officers and constitutional issues, there were several new business items discussed. This meeting is just what it takes to get everyone fired up for the NEA Convention.



The NEA Convention excitement began as we entered the Georgia World Congress Center. We were greeted by candidate supporters singing, chanting, and passing out materials. It is very impressive walking in and seeing all the signs for the state associations. Our NEA President, Dennis Van Roekel, did a great job conducting the meeting and keeping everyone focused and on task. Secret ballot voting took place for NEA Executive Committee candidates as well as constitution and by-law amendments. There were also many legislative and resolution amendments along with 93 new business items voted on by the body from the floor. We were introduced to, and heard from both the ESP and Teacher of the Year winners.

All in all, it was an exciting convention which made the long hours of sitting bearable. On the last day, darkness fell before the meeting was adjourned. Since our own Princess Moss is running for NEA

Secretary-Treasurer next year, the Virginia delegation sang, chanted, and passed out materials as the delegates were leaving the convention.

Election Time

by Pat Kennedy

Another year – another election! Yes it is that time again. We have the state election Governor, Lt. Governor, Attorney General, and the House of Representatives, as well as local officials. Check out VEA's Government Relations website for information on these elections.

<http://www.veanea.org/>
VEA-Retired also has our big election this January. We will be electing for a two year term (2014-2016):

- VEA-R president, and vice-president
- 2nd at-large VEA Board seat
- Even numbered districts for the VEA-R council (same as Congressional districts)
- Retired delegates to the VEA-GA (in Roanoke March 27-29, 2014) and;
- Retired delegates to the NEA-RA (in Denver, Colorado in late June and early July, 2014).

The total number of delegates needed to represent the retired at both conventions depends on the final membership count in November. Based on our

numbers now, we will be eligible for 5 delegates to the NEA-RA and 18 delegates to the VEA-GA. Your



President and 2nd VEA Board member attend also attend.

If you are interested in being a candidate here are the dates you need to know about.

Petitions for office for the two year terms (2014-2016) are available by contacting Barbara Rackley at Brackley@veanea.org, by phone at 1-800-552-9554, or by mail at Virginia Education Association, 116 South 3rd Street, Richmond, VA 23219.

Self -nomination forms for the VEA-GA and NEA-RA will also be available at the same address. Petition and self-nominations forms will also be available at the VEA-R Anniversary Gala October 22-23.

All petitions and self-nomination forms must be returned to VEA by **December 18, 2013**. Along with your petition you need to include an information bio not to exceed ½ pages.

Elections will be held January 22-24, 2014 starting at 12:01 am on the 22nd and ending at noon on the 24th. Elections will be electronic;

the website will be available on the VEA web site under the "VEA Election Central" link. You may use any electronic device (computer, iPods, iPhone, etc.) to access this site.

For those of you who would like a paper ballot you may request them between January 2-8, 2014 from the VEA at the same address as listed previously in this article. The paper ballot will be mailed to you on January 9, 2014 and must be returned or postmarked by January 17th in order to be counted. The election will be certified on January 27, 2014 and candidates notified of the official results on January 31st by mail.

This information will be repeated in the next VEA-R Connections and will be posted on the VEA-R website.

www.veanea.org/home/vea-retired.htm

Happy Anniversary VEA-R! Celebrate in Scenic Bath County!

The County of Bath has remained a cornerstone of Virginia's rich heritage since its establishment in 1745. Named for the English resort city of Bath, the county quickly became a national resort attraction, boasting its unique warm mineral springs

as well as the exquisite accommodations at the renowned Homestead Resort. Today, the County of Bath continues to attract visitors from all over with its beautiful splendor and vibrant culture. With plenty of outdoor activities including hunting, fishing, hiking and boating; an acclaimed music center; a selection of comfortable accommodations and a diverse range of shops and eateries, there's no telling what type of excitement you'll find tucked away in this unique part of the Allegheny Highlands.

On October 22nd and 23rd, VEA-R will be celebrating its 20th year at the Homestead Resort in Bath.



The Homestead is situated on 3,000 acres in the Allegheny Highlands and is one of America's highest rated resorts. Thomas Jefferson and 21 other presidents strolled around the grounds, as have many other American luminaries. Built in 1766 as a resort to "take the waters," the hotel and its spa have grown to include three championship golf courses, horseback riding, hiking, fishing, tennis,

swimming, skeet and trap shooting, falconry, skiing, snowboarding and ice skating.

Registration form enclosed!
See you there!

NEA Retired Annual Meeting and NEA Representative Assembly

By Ralph Booher Jr.

Thank you for electing me as a member of the Virginia Education Association -R Delegation that included Pat Kennedy, R. Edward Fifer, Deborah Jessee, and Dennis Pfennig. We enjoyed our morning breakfast together and each other's company during the meetings. We also participated in discussions on various issues.

Dennis VanRoekel's Keynote address entitled "NEA – We Educate America" made some very strong points. He began by saying, "It's what we do every day as individuals, but also what we do together as an organization ... working to lead our profession, and taking responsibility for our own professional practices." He continued by saying, "Our time is now. And it's time for

Action. It is time for us to transform public education by taking charge of our profession – and not allowing others to define it for us." "We need to shift from focusing on what we don't want - to focusing on what we do want." VanRoekel continued saying.

President VanRoekel's whole speech as well as the other speeches can be heard on <http://www.youtube.com/user/NEAABS>

I want to share some items that passed by the delegates at the NEA RA.

- A \$3 increase in the annual dues for active members to assist NEA Affiliates.
- A call for charter schools to be held to the same accountability standards as all other public schools.
- A Legislative Amendment that reads "reauthorization include extending the full protections and full enforcement of the Voting Rights Act of 1965."

- An item that directed NEA to lobby insurance providers to include coverage for the purchase of hearing aids.
- An item directing NEA to conduct a feasibility study regarding adjusting the NEA – Retired life dues for ESP members. The study shall report back to the 2014 NEA RA.

The following have announced their intention to run as candidates for an NEA Office in 2014:

NEA President – Lily Eskelson Garcia – *Utah*
NEA Vice President – Rebecca Pringle – *Pennsylvania*
NEA Secretary/Treasurer – Princess Moss – *Virginia*
Greg Johnson – *Oklahoma*
NEA Executive Committee – Shelly Moore – *Wisconsin*, George Sheridan – *California*, and Earl Wiman - *Tennessee*

Please feel free to contact me at:

Ralph Booher Jr.

VEA-R Council – 9th District

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THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT STRENGTHENING MEDICARE

Nearly 50 million older Americans and Americans with disabilities rely on Medicare each year. The new health care law makes Medicare stronger by adding new benefits, fighting fraud, cutting costs, and improving care for patients:



CUTTING COSTS

**NEARLY
\$4,200**

The amount the average person with Medicare will save by 2021 because of the new law.



CHEAPER PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

\$3.4 BILLION

Seniors and people with disabilities on Medicare saved over \$3.4 billion so far on prescription drugs because of the new health care law.



CLOSING THE DONUT HOLE BY 2020

By 2020, the Medicare prescription drug coverage gap will be closed.

\$15,700

Seniors who have prescription drug costs that hit the "donut hole" will save as much as \$15,700 by 2021.



FREE PREVENTIVE SERVICES

32.5 MILLION

Number of Medicare recipients provided with at least one new free preventive service in 2011 due to the Affordable Care Act.

Recommended preventive services that are covered include screenings for:

- Cancer
- Diabetes
- Blood pressure



FIGHTING FRAUD

20-50%

The Affordable Care Act increases federal sentencing guidelines for health care fraud offenses by 20-50 percent for major fraud crimes.

\$635

The average savings Medicare beneficiaries who hit the donut hole received on prescription drugs so far.



FIGHTING MEDICARE & MEDICAID FRAUD

The Affordable Care Act takes historic steps toward combating health care fraud, waste and abuse by providing critical new tools to crack down on entities and individuals attempting to defraud Medicare, Medicaid, and other health care programs.

ENFORCEMENT



**1,430
CHARGED**

The number of individuals charged with criminal fraud increased from 797 in fiscal year 2008 to 1,430 in fiscal year 2011—an increase of more than 75 percent.

SAVING MONEY FOR TAXPAYERS



\$10.7 BILLION

The Health Care Fraud and Abuse Control Program (HCFAC) has returned 10.7 billion dollars to the Medicare Trust Funds since the beginning of the Obama administration in 2009.

\$10.7 BILLION IS...

- enough to pay for 2 years of wellness visits for everyone in Medicare.
- enough to pay for all of the recommended mammograms for the 25 million women in Medicare for a decade.
- enough to pay for all of the ambulance trips that Medicare covers in 2 years.
- enough to pay for the first five years of drug discounts to Medicare beneficiaries, according to CBO estimates.



BRINGING THE HEAT

The Health Care Fraud Prevention and Enforcement Action Team (HEAT) has helped stop unprecedented numbers of suspected criminals including 150 defendants charged with approximately \$950 million in fraud over the last several months.



1.5 MILLION

The number of home health agencies, medical equipment suppliers, doctors, hospitals & providers who will be rescreened to ensure they are not defrauding taxpayers.

VEA-R Turns 20!

Please plan on joining us for two days of fellowship, learning and fun at the beautiful Homestead Resort in Bath County. The meeting begins on Tuesday October 22nd at noon and concludes on Wednesday the 23rd around 1:00.

As one of the nation's premier mountain resorts, The Homestead sets a fabulous stage for Virginia meetings and events. The Homestead's talented culinary team, led by internationally-trained Executive Chef Sean O'Connell, provides an extensive array of menu options.

The scenery is unmatched and the daily tea in the Great Hall is not to be missed.

Most importantly, you will get valuable information on Social Security, Medicare and the November Governor's election. You will reconnect with colleagues and share stories of the past.

The reservation form enclosed in the upcoming issue of the *Connections* can be mailed or faxed directly to the Homestead.

- You can choose a room with breakfast and dinner included or without.
- The discounted rates are available to VEA-R for Monday Oct. 21 and Wednesday October 23rd as well as for the Tuesday (Oct. 22) conference night.

We look forward to seeing you!

Reservation Details:

Mail to: Group Reservations, P.O. Box 2000, Hot Springs, Virginia 24445 or FAX 540-839-7670 You may also make reservations online (group code, VEAR) Reservations will be confirmed by e-mail.

Reservations by fax or mail only, no phone calls please. You may also make reservations online (group code, VEAR). Reservations will be confirmed by e-mail.



Virginia Education Association - Retired

October 22-23

The following daily rates are **per room, per day** based on the European Plan (No Meals).

Please circle preferred rate:

ROOMS:

Classic	Single - \$140.00	Double - \$140.00
Resort	Single - \$160.00	Double - \$160.00
Preferred Resort	Single - \$170.00	Double - \$170.00
Premier	Single - \$190.00	Double - \$190.00
Preferred Premier	Single - \$200.00	Double - \$200.00

SUITES:

(Based on availability)

Junior:	Single - \$260.00	Double - \$260.00
One Bedroom:	Single - \$360.00	Double - \$360.00
Two Bedroom:	Available Upon Request	
Presidents Suite:	Available Upon Request	

Children sharing room with parents:

0 to 18 years -	Complimentary	Additional Adult -	\$25.00
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The following daily rates are **per room, per day** based on the Modified American Plan (Dinner & Breakfast).

Please circle preferred rate:

ROOMS:

Classic	Single - \$230.00	Double - \$320.00
Resort	Single - \$250.00	Double - \$340.00
Preferred Resort	Single - \$260.00	Double - \$350.00
Premier	Single - \$280.00	Double - \$370.00
Preferred Premier	Single - \$290.00	Double - \$380.00

SUITES:

(Based on availability)

Junior:	Single - \$350.00	Double - \$440.00
One Bedroom:	Single - \$450.00	Double - \$540.00
Two Bedroom:	Available Upon Request	
Presidents Suite:	Available Upon Request	

Children sharing room with parents:

0 to 5 years -	Complimentary	6-12 Years -	\$30.00 per child	13-18 years -	\$55.00 per child	Additional Adult -	\$115.00 per person
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15% daily resort charge is additional. Package prices are subject to applicable state and local taxes (currently 9%) in effect at the time of check-in.

Arrival date: _____/Time: _____ Departure date: _____/Time: _____

Name (please print) _____ No. of adults _____

Roommate (if applicable) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Daytime Telephone _____ FAX _____

Email Address: _____

Children's names and ages: _____