



## Retired Delegates to the NEA Representative Assembly

If you wish to be a candidate for NEA-Retired delegate to the NEA Representative Assembly, July 2-6 in Atlanta, GA, you must file a Declaration of Candidacy form by February 15, 2020. Contact William Baird at OEA (800) 282-1500 or (614) 227-3169 for more information. Go to OEA-R website for Declaration of Candidacy form for NEA RA Delegate—<http://oea-r.ohea.us/page/election-information/>

## OEA-R Advisory Council Election

The following positions on the OEA-R Advisory Council are open for election. Declaration of Candidacy forms are to be submitted to OEA Secretary/Treasurer by February 15, 2020.

- At-Large
- Central
- East Central
- South East
- OEA-R Higher Education (2022)

The above positions are for a term beginning September 1, 2020 and ending July 14, 2023, except for the unexpired Higher Education position. Members holding these positions serve as automatic delegates to the OEA Representative Assembly by virtue of office. Go to OEA-R website for Declaration of Candidacy forms for OEA-Retired Advisory Council positions—<http://oea-r.ohea.us/page/election-information/>

## OEA-Retired Delegate Election Results

During October, OEA-R members elected 27 Delegates to the OEA Representative Assembly from a field of 32 candidates. The 18 OEA-Retired Advisory Council members are automatic delegates by virtue of office, for a delegation of 45 delegates and 5 alternates by order of votes.

The 2019-2020 OEA-R Delegates and Alternates from NEOEA-R are listed here by votes received: (There were a total of 785 votes cast, 258 from NEOEA-R members.)

- **Delegates by virtue of office on OEA-R Advisory Council:** **Peg Ham**, OEA-R Advisory Council Secretary; **Donna Smoot-Walters**, OEA-R Advisory Council NEOEA Representative; **Barb Catalano**, OEA-R Advisory Council ESP Representative.
- **Delegates (by order of votes):** William A. Dorsey; Nanci DiBanca; Marti Franks; Marsh Buckley; Nancy Wonson; Bill Lavezzi; Gary Hollow; Lynnette R. Harris; Hank Haynes; Joyce M. Hives; Norm Hillstrom; Lynn Aring; and Steven Mitchell.
- **Alternates:** John Veverka; and Dialis York.

Delegates attend both the Fall and Spring OEA Representative Assemblies. On the day before, the OEA-R Delegate Assembly meets at the STRS building to carry out the business of OEA Retired and for a briefing with the OEA officers and reports from the OEA-R Advisory Council. Delegates from NEOEA also attend the Fall and Spring NEOEA RAs.

Thank you to NEOEA Retired Delegates that attended the NEOEA Fall RA: Lynn Aring, Marshall Buckley, Barbara Catalano, Nanci DiBianca, William Dorsey, Martha Franks, Peg Ham, Hank Haynes, Norm Hillstrom, Joyce Hives, Gary Hollow, Bill Lavezzi, Steven Mitchell, Donna Smoot-Walters, John Veverka, and Nancy Wonson,

And a thank you to those who attended the OEA Fall RA: Lynn Aring, Marsh Buckley, Barb Catalano, Nanci DiBianca, Bill Dorsey, Marti Franks, Lynnette Harris, Hank Haynes, Norm Hillstrom, Joyce Hives, Gary Hollow, Bill Lavezzi, Steven Mitchell, Donna Smoot-Walters, John Veverka, and Nancy Wonson.

## Remembering Homer Adams

by Bill Lavezzi

I've been encouraged to share some recollections of retired Parma EA member Homer Adams, who passed away on October 18. Many of our active and retired members will have their own recollections of Homer. I had the advantage of knowing him in multiple capacities: our friendship started when both of us were local leaders and came full circle until more recently, when we were both retired OEA delegates.

Parma was one of the first local associations to embrace teacher unionism back in the sixties. This was before the unification of locals with NEOEA/NEOTA, OEA, and NEA; before Labor Relations Consultants and the UniServ system; and before Ohio's collective bargaining law. Homer was one of PEA's presidents.

I met him as an NEOEA committee member in the late seventies, and for decades after that I would see him at various events, as a delegate or volunteer. I started to hear much more from him when I served as NEOEA President in 1995-96, and even more after I started serving as NEOEA Executive Director in 2000. He always advocated for the various levels of the Association to recognize the potential value of retired members--as a volunteer force and a source of political strength. His persistence helped persuade NEOEA's Board of Directors to create the NEOEA-R Organizing Committee in the early 2000s.

Homer was a dedicated traveler and a frequent correspondent. Dozens--perhaps hundreds--of people were used to receiving post cards from his various trips. Dozens of leaders in Ohio and Florida

(and probably in other states) became accustomed to his snail-mails with copies of political articles he had found in various newspapers and magazines.

And he was also a generous and patient friend. People who helped him in some way would start receiving gift subscriptions to magazines. We were frequent roommates at the NEA Annual Meeting, and he always knew where to get a good, inexpensive meal in an expensive convention city. This continued after I began attending as NEOEA's Executive Director, and he didn't complain as I brought a portable office that occupied just about every horizontal surface in a small hotel room.

Although NEOEA has existed for 150 years, its modern history--as an affiliate of labor organizations--goes back only about 45 years. Many of the characters who helped make this transition are getting older now, and it's important to honor them. It's a pleasure to honor and recall Homer's memory: as a friend, a volunteer, and an advocate.

### NEA Presidential Candidate Interviews

Want to hear what the candidates have to say about strong public schools? Visit [www.StrongPublicSchools.org](http://www.StrongPublicSchools.org) to see and hear their views.

NEA is inviting all presidential candidates to participate in a one-on-one interview with NEA President Lily Eskelsen Garcia to help our members better understand their positions on issues of vital importance to the success of our public schools. To qualify for interviews, candidates were asked to fill out a detailed questionnaire; once complete, candidates were invited to sit down with Lily. As additional interviews are confirmed, these candidates will appear on the website, so stay tuned!

JOIN OHIO GENERAL ASSEMBLY LEADERS AT NEOEA'S ANNUAL LEGISLATIVE RECEPTIONS

### NEOEA Legislative Receptions

NEOEA invites you and two other members of your local association to attend our annual Legislative Reception with members of the Ohio General Assembly and the State School Board, to be held on Monday, February 24,

2020, simultaneously at two locations. Your local may choose among the following zones:

- East: SDs 18, 25, 32, 33 (Ashtabula, Geauga, Lake, Mahoning, Portage, and Trumbull Counties) at The Grand Resort (formerly Avalon Inn), 9519 East Market Street, Warren, 44484
- West: SDs 2, 13, 21, 22, 23, 24 (Cuyahoga, Erie, Lorain, Medina, and Summit Counties) at Woodside Event Center at St. Michael's, 5025 East Mill Road, Broadview Hts., 44147

We have invited all northeastern Ohio members of the Ohio General Assembly and Ohio Board of Education to attend. We will give each legislator and board member a moment of microphone time. The program for the evening is: 5:00–5:15 PM—registration, cash bar; 5:15–6:00 PM—buffet dinner; 6:00–7:30 PM—legislators and Q&A.

Space is limited: no more than three members from each local, please. Registrations are due by Friday, February 14. Confirmations and driving directions will be sent by email to registered participants. Registration form at: <https://www.neoea.org/LegislativeReception.pdf>.

### OEA-Retired Report

by Donna Smoot Walters, NE-R OEA Retired Advisory Board

JOIN OUR TEAM!!! NEOEA Retired members are invited to join the Ohio Education Association-Retired Retiree Action Team (RAT). The RAT consists of OEA-R members who are trained and equipped to assist active members on issues that require rapid response. Such issues could include school crisis, labor disputes, membership campaigns, legislative action, political action, etc. NE-R members, Marsh Buckley and Adele Matias have volunteered to lead the charge for our district. Get involved. Plan to attend the informational meeting and training, February 25, 10am. – 3pm. (OEA-R, 225 East Broad St. Columbus OH 43215) Reserve your spot now at <https://tinyurl.com/OEARAT>. For further information, contact OEA-Retired Liaison Todd Jaecht ([jaecht@ohea.org](mailto:jaecht@ohea.org) or 614.227.3119)

NE–R members, Lynette Harris, Joyce Hives, and Donna Smoot Walters attended the Doris L. Allen Minority Caucus 46th Annual Dinner, December 6th. The keynote speaker, Ruby

Fredricka Shuttlesworth Bester, delivered a very spirited discourse about “Unlocking Opportunities for Ethnic Minority Girls”.

As long as we have breath, there is something more for us to do!

### OEA Board of Directors Report

By Carol Kinsey, OEA-R OEA Board of Directors

As always, please feel free to contact me with questions and/or concerns you may have at [cskinsey@aol.com](mailto:cskinsey@aol.com) or 330-495-2318. I thank you for your gift of allowing me to continue to represent you on the OEA Board of Directors. It is a position I take seriously and I am proud to represent OEA-R.

Here is your report following the recent December OEA Board of Directors Meeting and Highlights of the OEA Representative Assembly where we were privileged to hear NEA President Lily Eskelsen Garcia speak to and motivate OEA members.

The Fall OEA RA deals only with Emergency New Business items. This year the RA unanimously passed one New Business item stating OEA's position on School Report Cards. The content was released to the media and sent to legislators on Monday, December 9. For more information visit the OEA website: <https://www.ohea.org/ohea-calls-for-sweeping-changes-to-state-report-cards/>. You will be hearing more in the coming months and your help to lobby legislators on this critical issue is needed and will be welcomed.

The Board voted to accept the Executive Directors recommendations for three staff positions----the Region 3 Director is a new position as OEA will be reverting from 3 back to 4 Regions in January based on phenomenal membership numbers after the Janus decision failed to adversely affect membership.

### OEA-R Mentoring Program

By Debbie Bernauer

The OEA-R Mentoring Program got a late start this year due, in part, to the uncertainty of support from OEA. Most of the 11 mentors and 27 mentees met for the first time at Kent State University on October 21st. Since then,

many participated in the annual trip to The North Pole where we dressed up as elves and greeted the children on The Polar Express. It was great fun and a wonderful way for the mentors and mentees to connect on a more social level.

Although mentors don't have the same experiences as their mentees, retirees can help by encouraging student educators and bringing them together in a nonthreatening setting to talk over situations that they run into in their field experiences and student teaching. Mentors can also provide insights about the profession, the need to be politically active, and the importance of belonging to a union. Hopefully the program will go on for many years to come.

### NEOEA Megaconference

Save the Date! Plan to join us March 7 for our annual Megaconference at Corporate College East. Your choice of 12 different topics at 9, 10 and 11 AM, plus breakfast and lunch — all for \$15. And, if you have a coupon from your local president, it's free!

Consider two sessions sponsored by NEOEA Retired, "Mentoring Matters" or "Who's Working to Undermine Public Education and Unions?" or choose from sessions from other committees that will appeal to retirees. Full details at: <https://neoea.org/Mega/>.

In today's environment, we need to plan for our own retirement. To help keep you informed of the STRS/SERS benefits that you can expect at retirement and to help you explore other vehicles to be financially secure and consider other obligations you may encounter in retirement, NEOEA is funding a special program for retired and pre-retired members, after lunch following Megaconference.

### NEOEA-Retired Spring Conference

Save the date! The popular NEOEA Retired Spring Conference will be held on April 16, 2020, at the NEOEA Conference Center. Invite a friend for a continental breakfast, lunch, and meet up with old and new friends. Three Break-out sessions: NEA Member Benefits/Travel, STRS/SERS, and an Author Talk and Book Exchange. The registration form will be included in the March newsletter.

### Volunteer at the Greater Cleveland Food Bank

Our Social and Human Concerns Committee would like you to join us at the Greater Cleveland Food Bank to help sort and repack nonperishable food that is later distributed to local food pantries, soup kitchens, and shelters. We're limited to 30 participants—so sign up soon! Date and time: Thursday, February 20, 2020, from 6:00-8:00 p.m. <https://www.neoea.org/FoodBank.pdf>

### Cleveland Play House

**Clue:** February 8 & 9—Discount tickets available: Bring your Game Night to CPH! It's a dark and stormy night, and you've been invited to a very unusual dinner party. Murder and blackmail are on the menu when six mysterious guests assemble at Boddy Manor for a night they'll never forget! Was it Mrs. Peacock in the study with the knife? Or was it Colonel Mustard in the library with the wrench? Based on the cult 1985 Paramount movie and inspired by the classic Hasbro board game, Clue is the ultimate whodunit that will leave you dying of laughter and keep you guessing until the final twist. <https://www.neoea.org/CPH-Clue.pdf>

### Oh, the Places We Go— Grab Your Hat and Read with the Cat

Remember – "You're never too old, too wacky, too wild, to pick up a book and read with a child."---Dr. Seuss

We will be celebrating NEA's READ ACROSS AMERICA during the month of March 2020. We will read to students across NEOEA. Retired readers are needed to read in classrooms, libraries, or at other events where children are gathered. Plan to join us. You pick the day, the time, and the place. Invite another retired members to join you. We want you to have a wonderful RAA experience showing students that the joy of reading is a lifelong skill. More information and ideas at: <https://www.ohea.org/get-involved/read-across-america/> and <http://www.nea.org/grants/886.htm>. If you can spend some time in this fun experience contact Beryl Burkle at 330-659-3928 for helpful information.



### OEA FCPE Recommendations – 2019-2020

The OEA Board of Directors, at its September 2019 meeting, outlined how to more robustly and effectively engage OEA Local Associations and members in maximizing contributions to FCPE. Recommendations spell out statewide goals for member participation, messaging strategy, and direct solicitation targets, and setting expectations about the importance of contributing to FCPE. The statewide goal for 2019-2020 is to achieve 15% member participation, with a goal of \$2.00 per pay period or \$52 per year. Current participation is just over 10%.

Changing the Tone: Messaging to members about FCPE will reinforce how collective power makes a real, tangible difference in the ability to advocate for members and the students we serve.

A new focus will be on retirees, particularly those who were active sustaining givers to FCPE when working, but whose FCPE activity has declined or stopped altogether upon retirement. Retirees will be contacted and recognized for the value of their contributions, with a separate award to highlight those retirees who are sustaining contributors to FCPE. Retirees can set up one time or continuing contributions with a credit card at <https://www.ohea.org/donate/>.

The OEA Fund for Children and Public Education helps ensure that we elect and retain public office holders who advocate for students and support public education, regardless of political party, so they can:

- Ensure that key decision-making is made by local school districts, and not the state
- Address inequities in the current school funding formula
- Reduce the testing burden placed on Ohio's students
- Maintain strong collective bargaining rights for our members
- Continue the fight to fund educational opportunities for all children

Over the past few years, FCPE has made strategic investments in expanding a bi-



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**NEOEA-R Organizing Committee:**

- Nancy Wonsor, Lakewood TA-R; Chairperson
- Dennis Lewis, Parma EA-R; Vice Chair
- Sherri Koncilja, Painesville City TA-R; Secretary
- Gary Hollow, Bristol-R; Past Chair
- Donna Smoot-Walters, Barberton EA-R; NEOEA Liaison & OEA-R NEOEA Representative
- Peg Ham, Lorain EA-R; OEA-R Secretary
- Barbara Catalano, Mayfield EA-R; OEA-R ESP Representative
- Hank Haynes, ACCESS-R; web/newsletter editor
- Debbie Bernauer, Brecksville-Broadview EA-R
- Rhonda Braylock, East Cleveland EA-R
- Marsh Buckley, Mentor TA-R
- Beryl Burkle, Bedford EA-R
- Dave Ciborek, Twinsburg EA-R
- Nanci DiBianca, Cuyahoga Hts. TA-R
- Carol Dolgosh, Lakewood TA-R
- Martha Dunford, Perry EA-R
- Sue Fatica, Painesville City TA-R
- Marti Franks, Twinsburg EA-R
- Patricia Frost-Brooks, East Cleveland EA-R
- Martha Harper, Ashtabula ACSE-R
- Norman Hillstrom, Mentor TA-R
- Joyce Hives, East Cleveland EA-R
- Mary Keefe, Maple Hts. TA-R
- Bill Lavezzi, Aurora EA-R
- Adele Matias, Mayfield EA-R
- Steven Mitchell, East Cleveland EA-R
- Pat Waggar, Mayfield EA-R

partisan coalition of policymakers in the Ohio General Assembly who are pro-public education and pro-union. This coalition has allowed OEA to engage in a pro-active rather than a defensive legislative strategy. OEA is now able to implement more effectively an OEA member-driven policy agenda that can make improvements in members' working conditions and the learning environment for our students.

By having more members participate in FCPE, we will have the resources to create greater opportunities to grow our bi-partisan coalition and build upon the momentum we have created.

**Retirement System Updates**

Your Retirement System has valuable tools and publications to manage your account and keep you informed. Create your online account and login to access your information.

- STRS <https://www.strsoh.org/>
- SERS <https://www.ohsers.org/>
- PERS <https://www.opers.org/>

**Need to Update Your Contact Information?**

Update your OEA & NEOEA contact information at: 1-844-OEA-info (1 844 632 4636) or [membership@ohea.org](mailto:membership@ohea.org).

**NEOEA Discounts**

Check the **NEOEA.org** website for complete information on these valuable discounts. Visit <http://neoea.org/resources/member-benefits/>.

**NEA & OEA Discounts**

Enjoy financial programs and discounts offered by **NEA Member Benefits**: For questions call 1.800.637.4636 (toll free); <https://www.neamb.com/>.

**NEA Click & Save**, <http://www.neamb.com/clickandsave>.

**OEA ACCESS**, <https://ohea.org/member-center/member-benefits/>.

**NEOEA Calendar**

- January 28** NEOEA Leadership Summit, Spitzer Conference Center, Lorain CCC, Elyria
- February 11** NEOEA-R Organizing Committee, NEOEA Office
- February 24** NEOEA Legislative Receptions, two locations
- March** Read Across America, various schools and libraries across northeastern Ohio
- March 7** NEOEA Megaconference, Corporate College East
- April 16** NEOEA-Retired Spring Conference, NEOEA Office
- April 16** NEOEA-R Organizing Committee, NEOEA Office
- April 25** NEOEA Representative Assembly, Cuyahoga Falls
- May 2** NEOEA All Committee Conference, NEOEA Office
- May 8-9** OEA Representative Assembly, Columbus
- June 5** NEOEA Committees on the Go, NEOEA Office