VOL 43 • NO. 1 • JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2016

# IT'S MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL TIME!

It's membership renewal time for LRTA members. Members who renew their membership on an annual basis, as well as former members with lapsed dues, and non-members will receive membership invitations/renewal letters with this issue of the newsletter.

LRTA is the largest organization dedicated to the preservation of benefits and advocacy for the welfare of Louisiana's retired educators. Through the years, LRTA's members have worked together to create a strong, viable and professional organization, and the association looks forward to carrying our message to all those who make decisions on our behalf.

We need your support to remain strong and to maintain a unified voice representing all retirees from Louisiana's educator community. Annual dues are \$25. Lifetime dues are \$500.

This mailing from LRTA includes several items in one package. This helps to economize on postage, to direct contents to appropriate recipients, to expedite delivery, and to help you in returning materials to the LRTA office. The table below shows the materials you received, based on your membership status in LRTA.

Ballots are sent to voting members of LRTA: those individuals include Lifetime Members, Annual Members who renew each year and Continuous Members who have authorized payment of their annual dues by automatic deduction from their April retirement benefit.

Membership renewal forms are sent to all members who renew annually. Nonmembers receive a complimentary copy of the *LRTA*Newsletter and an invitation to join LRTA.

Ballots, membership forms and renewal checks may all be returned to LRTA in the enclosed postage paid envelope. Please return as soon as possible, but please note that ballots must be received by February 19 in order to be counted.

## **INSIDE THIS ISSUE**

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# IMPORTANT DATES

LRTA SPRING MEETING HOLIDAY INN DOWNTOWN, ALEXANDRIA , LA APRIL 26 & 27, 2016

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MEMBER CLASS	NEWSLETTER	RETURN ENVELOPE	LRTA BALLOT	MEMBERSHIP FORM	CANDIDATE INFORMATION
LIFETIME MEMBER	х	х	Х		х
CONTINUING MEMBER	Х	Х	Х		Х
ANNUAL RENEWAL	х	Х	Х	Х	Х
NON-MEMBER	х	X		X	
ASSOCIATE MEMBER	Х				

### **STAY CONNECTED**

If you would like to join LRTA's Email club, please visit www.lrta.net. Type your email address in the space provided under the heading "Join Our Email Club" and click on "Join." You will receive email updates regarding current events taking place in LRTA.

If you would like to stay informed via our Facebook page, please go to www.facebook.com/lrta1. Click on the "like" button to receive our updates and posts.

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# LRTA Executive Board

President James T. Stewart 1638 Creed St. Pineville, LA 71360

Past President Lonnie E. Dunn, Ed. D. 3750 Christy Dr. Shreveport, LA 71129

First Vice-President Bertha H. Breland 1201 N. Columbia St. Bogalusa, LA 70427

Second Vice-President Nancy L. Quigley 5210 Airline Dr. Bossier City, LA 71111

District I President Theodore H. George, Sr. P.O. Box 15713 New Orleans, LA 70175

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District V President Martha G. Bryant 1087 Ruth Bridge Hwy. Breaux Bridge, LA 70517

District VI President Clara F. Duhon 614 Oleo St. Lake Charles, LA 70601

District VII President Benjamin L. Sandifer 1001 Oak St. Jonesville, LA 71343

District VIII President Raymond Powell P. O. Box 523 Mansfield, LA 71052

District IX President Dorothy W. Brown 1207 Maple St. Winnsboro, LA 71295

District X President Cathryn L. Buckley 12764 Hwy. 2 Bernice, LA 71222

District XI President Jan Webb 1830 Venus Dr. Bossier City, LA 71112

TRSL Board of Trustees: Jerry J. Baudin, Ph. D. 15323 Alma Mater Ct. Baton Rouge, LA 70810

James A. Taylor, Sr., J. D., Ph. D 8122 Royalwood Dr. Baton Rouge, La 70806

OGB Board

AARP Louisiana Brenda G. Hatfield, Ph. D. 301 Main St., Suite 1012 Baton Rouge, LA 70825

LASS-R Donald A. Songy 37617 Seven Oaks Ave Prairieville, LA 70769

#### PRESIDENT'S REPORT



2016—A new year, a new start, a new beginning. Thanks to all--members, officers (state, district and local) and staff who worked hard to make 2015 a successful year.

Also, a huge "thanks" to all who worked to understand the issues and voted.

We will start 2016 with a new administration and legislature. We must work together as we develop our legislative priorities. Each retiree is encouraged to learn who their state senators and representatives are, and to make contact to begin the process of developing a working relationship.

Why is this important? Currently, more than 75,000 retirees depend on their Defined Benefit plan administered by the Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana (TRSL) to send them a check. Defined Benefit plans are under attack—some

states have had to defend their defined benefit plans in court. This resulted in these states plans having to seek legal counsel. LRTA has put into place a plan to be implemented if our pension plan comes under attack. Members may be called on in the future to help fund this plan.

What can do you immediately? First and most importantly, is to be a member of LRTA, the only organization working to protect the benefits of Louisiana's retired teachers. We need you to reach out to friends who, for whatever reason, have not joined and encourage them to become members.

Additionally, as we start a new year, let us reflect on the lives of those members who are no longer with us. Take the time to look at the 'In Memoriam' section of 2015 newsletters. Many of these individuals filled leadership roles within LRTA. You can celebrate their lives by volunteering to carry on these leadership roles.

Finally, make plans to attend the Spring LRTA Meeting in Alexandria on April 26 and 27. District VII President Ben Sandifer has already started planning for a great convention!

Sincerely, James T. Stewart

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Governor-elect John Bel Edwards participated in public discussions and completed our legislative survey very early in his bid for our state's highest elected office. He is committed to maintaining a defined benefit plan and continued exemption of retirement benefits from state income tax. He also opposes consolidation of the four state retirement plans. Finally, he supports COLAs or PBIs (Permanent Benefit Increases) for our retirees.

Many of you are aware that Representative Sam Jones spoke at our fall meeting in Lake Charles, LA. He talked with Governor-elect Edwards prior to the election and verbalized a strong need to seek COLA/PBI legislation this spring.

The current PBI legislation, Act No. 399 of 2014, contains language that affects

the payment mechanism for the Experience Account held by our state retirement system. Three caveats must be considered in order to receive a PBI.

- 1. Excess Investment earnings must be allocated to the Experience Account
- 2. The system must be at least 55% but less than 65% funded to receive a benefit increase of 1.5%
- 3. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) for the previous twelve-month period (must be a negative value)

Currently, there is funding for a COLA/PBI in the Experience Account (bullet



one) and our system is 60.9% funded (bullet two), therefore qualifying for a 1.5% increase. However, bullet three establishes sustaining barrier to receiving а COLA/PBI because the CPI continues to register as a positive value.

The bottom line is that as long as the CPI remains as a *Continued on Page 5* 

# **LRTA 2015 STATISTICAL REPORT**

LRTA MEMBERSHIP BY DISTRICTS AS OF DECEMBER 4, 2015

DISTRICT	2014	2014	2015	2015	2015	2015		2015
Parish	Members	%Mbrs	Retirees	Non-Members	Members	%Mbrs		Associate
DISTRICT I							_	
Orleans	1,105	34.8	3,259	2,167	1,092	33.5		11
Plaquemines	41	23.0	178	138	40	22.5		1
St. Bernard	76	46.9	168	93	75	44.6		4
TOTAL	1,222	34.8	3,605	2,398	1,207	33.5		16
DISTRICT II								
Assumption	138	52.1	272	135	137	50.4		5
Jefferson	1,113	28.8	3,917	2,817	1,100	28.1		19
Lafourche	563	39.7	1,447	901	546	37.7		37
St. Charles	210	37.2	593	379	214	36.1		1
St. James	196	55.7	357	163	194	54.3		8
St. John	139	34.2	427	286	141	33.0		1
Terrebonne	475	38.3	1,262	769	493	39.1		15
TOTAL	2,834	35.0	8,275	5,450	2,825	34.1		86
DISTRICT III								
Livingston	286	26.4	1,160	873	287	24.7		19
St. Helena	30	28.0	107	77	30	28.0		0
St. Tammany	954	35.9	2,820	1,814	1,006	35.7		808
Tangipahoa	443	28.0	1,623	1,157	466	28.7		28
Washington	257	40.0	669	414	255	38.1		211
TOTAL	1,970	32.4	6,379	4,335	2,044	32.0		1,066
DISTRICT IV								
Ascension	371	36.1	1,091	717	374	34.3		14
East Baton Rouge	1,733	28.6	6,135	4,402	1,733	28.2		24
East Feliciana	62	30.0	219	145	74	33.8		2
Iberville	91	26.3	353	259	94	26.6		1
Pointe Coupee	91	31.0	301	209	92	30.6		18
West Baton Rouge	50	22.6	232	175	57	24.6		2
West Feliciana	44	27.8	164	117	47	28.6		14
TOTAL	2,442	29.4	8,495	6,024	2,471	29.1		75
DISTRICT V								
Evangeline	119	24.7	494	378	116	23.5		3
Iberia	320	30.9	1,044	736	308	29.5		64
Lafayette	924	35.3	2,715	1,779	936	34.5		386
St. Landry	367	27.5	1,384	1,009	375	27.1	Ì	18
St. Martin	157	30.6	523	368	155	29.6	Ì	27
St. Mary	205	38.1	540	335	205	38.0		15
Vermilion	247	37.7	680	444	236	34.7		11
TOTAL	2,339	32.6	7,380	5,049	2,331	31.2		524

							$\parallel$	
GRAND TOTAL	20,156	32.8	63,085	42,890	20,195	32.0		2,264
Out of State	2,523	34.3	7,491	4,992	2,499	33.4	$\parallel$	40
							$\parallel$	
TOTAL	1,824	31.3	6,003	4,177	1,826	30.4	H	35
Webster	182	28.3	660	485	175	26.5	$\dagger$	3
Claiborne	1,094	47.0	218	115	103	47.2	$\dagger$	2
Bossier Caddo	367 1,094	28.0 31.8	1,380 3,518	1,000 2,429	380 1,089	27.5 31.0	$^{+}$	3 15
Bienville	80	35.7	227	148	79	34.8	$\dagger$	12
DISTRICT XI	00	25.7	227	1/10	70	24.0	+	10
DISTRICT VI	1,340	34.5	3,977	2,660	1,317	33.1	+	173
Union	110	36.4	300	189	111	37.0	+	9
Ouachita	587	30.1	2,022	1,431	591	29.2	$^{+}$	13
Morehouse	140	45.5	314	181	133	42.4	+	3
Lincoln	353	38.6	924	589	335	36.3	$^{+}$	142
Jackson	98	35.9	279	182	97	34.8	$^{+}$	6
Caldwell	52	38.2	138	88	50	36.2	+	0
	52	20.7	120	90	EO	36.7	$^{+}$	0
DISTRICT X	343	20./	1,210	0/1	203	<b>40.U</b>	$^{+}$	
West Carroll TOTAL	52 343	24.5 28.7		169 871	339	22.8	$^{+}$	0 2
Tensas	26 52	29.9	83 219	56 169	27 50	32.5 22.8	+	1
Richland	94	31.5	308	213	95	30.8	$^{+}$	1
Madison	42	26.6	158	114	44	27.8	+	0
Franklin	108	32.2	339	238	101	29.8	$^{+}$	0
East Carroll	21	19.8	103	81	22	21.4	$^{+}$	0
DISTRICT IX	24	40.0	400				H	
TOTAL	664	37.1	1,851	1,174	677	36.6	Ц	95
Winn	94	38.1	256	165	91	35.5		0
Sabine	142	39.6	371	220	151	40.7	Ц	58
Red River	31	33.0	98	70	28	28.6		5
Natchitoches	238	32.9	748	501	247	33.0		3
DeSoto	159	43.4	378	218	160	42.3		29
DISTRICT VIII								
TOTAL	1,261	32.7	3,950	2,697	1,253	31.7		28
Vernon	140	26.4	537	402	135	25.1		1
Rapides	632	33.3	1,951	1,327	624	32.0		10
LaSalle	72	36.0	207	139	68	32.9		0
Grant	97	31.3	311	215	96	30.9	Ц	0
Concordia	81	32.3	256	173	83	32.4		4
Catahoula	42	28.0	151	108	43	28.5		0
Avoyelles	197	37.5	537	333	204	38.0	$\prod$	13
DISTRICT VII								
TOTAL	1,394	32.2	4,469	3,063	1,406	31.5		124
Jeff Davis	133	34.3	403	263	140	34.7	I	8
Cameron	10	26.3	38	29	9	23.7		0
Calcasieu	833	32.4	2,639	1,784	855	32.4	Ħ	98
Beauregard	166	35.2	493	323	170	34.5	Ħ	4
Allen	61	24.9	261	202	59	22.6	Ħ	2
Acadia	191	30.7	635	462	173	27.2		12

# THE PATH OF DEFINED BENEFITS

#### WHICH ROAD WILL GET US THERE?

Your vote for Governor this fall will have a significant impact on the future of our retirement benefits. This positive call to activism shows how our retirees are a voice of democracy.

As we move ahead, I'm reminded of the old dictum: "If you don't know where you're going, any path will take you there." Our path this fall was clearly the road that preserves current retirement our plan. This Defined Benefit (DB) plan provides our future and current retirees guaranteed monthly benefit. Many legislators want to change our DB plan to a DC (Defined Contribution) plan.

Why do they want to do this? Employer costs, at least temporarily, have increased, which puts a strain on the state budget. This is for two reasons: first, because the current unfunded accrued liability (UAL) increased has employer costs to 26% for the next 13 years, and, second, because of market volatility.

Naturally, the state wants to control for the amount and volatility of the employer's contribution to our retirement system. However, we need to stay on the Defined Benefit path, because the UAL is being paid down each year and will eventually decrease the

employer costs to around 4%, which is lower than the employer costs for Social Security.

Ultimately, under the current DB path, the state will experience long term cash savings. Additionally, because our retirement asset base continues to grow, our long-term funding requirements will stay intact. This broad asset base provides more than 60% of our monthly benefits.

Several legislators want to make revisions to our current system. Representative Barry Ivey met with stake holders on November 25, 2015, and discussed a need to change our current DB plan to what he called a "stacked hybrid" plan. New employees would participate in a hybrid plan using both DB and DC elements.

Regardless of the merits of this hybrid plan, if our current plan essentially closes in terms of no additional contributors (new hires), then what happens to our asset base when there is no additional funding?

How has the governor's race affected the future of our retirement system? Our Governor-elect John Bel Edwards has indicated strong support for our current retirement plan. This support for the current DB

plan will provide a balance to the counter argument for a change to a hybrid system currently under discussion. Representative Ivey indicated a desire for a special session in February 2016 to introduce new legislation introducing a new tier to our current system.

Governor-elect John Bel Edwards takes his oath of office on January 11, 2016. He has assembled a diverse group of knowledgable individuals as members of his transition team.

Our governor elect and state legislature have a huge budget deficit to address in the coming months. So, when addressing the dictum "If you don't know where you're going, any path will take you there," I submit that LRTA needs to stay on the Defined Benefit path for new hires, active employees, and retired TRSL members.

As we move into a series of legislative sessions this spring, we will ask you to contact your legislators as we defend our retirement system. This continued call to activism by our membership will be addressed through our newsletters, phone calls, and emails.

We continue to ask each of our members to join our email club as this is the fastest and most efficient manner to communicate to our members.

As your Executive Director, I will continue to participate actively in all meetings and conversations that affect future benefits of our membership.

# RETIRED TEACHERS DAY SET FOR MARCH 17

Louisiana Retired Teachers Day will be celebrated on Thursday, March 17. This is a time for the state and your local communities to show appreciation for the many years of dedication and service provided by Louisiana's retired educators.

Soon after inauguration day on January 11, LRTA will make a request to the Governor's office for an official proclamation. If you'd like to receive a copy of the Governor's official proclamation, contact the LRTA office with your request.

If you need help planning an event, and/or if you'd like a customized proclamation for use at your local event, the LRTA staff is ready to assist.

Please be sure to send us photos of your Retired Teachers Day celebrations! JANUARARY/FEBRUARY 2016 Page 5

Continued from Page 2

cannot award a benefit increase even though the money remains in the for future COLA/PBIs. Experience Account.

Our regular legislative session will run from March 14 until June 6, 2016. LRTA will work with

positive value, the state Representative Jones and our Governor to amend this legislation to provide

> Warmest Personal Regards, Rodney R. Watson

#### **LOOKING AHEAD**

LRTA will carefully monitor:

- The Governor's Organizational Session (January)
- PRSAC's approval of this year's TRSL Valuation Report
- The Governor's Special Session (February)
- The Regular Legislative Session (March-June)

#### **2016 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES**

LRTA supports legislation that will positively affect retired teachers and opposes legislation that will adversely affect retired teachers. LRTA also supports efforts to maintain adequate funding for top quality public education in Louisiana. Although these priorities are listed in numerical order, the items listed are all top priorities of LRTA.

- 1. LRTA supports a viable Employee Experience Account for accumulating a portion of the excess interest earnings of the Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana for future funding of cost-of-living increases for retirees.
- 2. LRTA supports dedicated allocations from state funds for cost-of-living increases.
- 3. LRTA supports a stable, automatic cost-of-living increase provision for retirees as part of the benefit structure offered by the Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana.
- 4. LRTA supports dedicated allocations from state funds to meet the state's obligation to reduce the Initial Unfunded Accrued Liabilities (IUALs) of the Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana without causing an adverse budget impact on public education agencies or retirees.
- 5. LRTA supports state revenue enhancements that provide a meaningful economic impact on retired educators in enhancing their dignity, independence and overall quality of life.
- 6. LRTA supports funding from state funds to offset increasing costs of health insurance premiums and other benefits for retired educators offered by the Office of Group Benefits and other health care insurers and providers.
- 7. LRTA opposes any action that would negatively impact the actuarial soundness of the Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana.
- 8. LRTA opposes the consolidation of the Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana with any other retirement system.
- 9. LRTA opposes the consolidation of assets of the Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana with any other retirement system, and opposes any other action that would dilute membership control of the investment of the assets of the Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana.
- 10. LRTA opposes any action that would alter the current defined benefit structure offered by the Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana to its members.
- 11. LRTA supports a viable, adequately funded public education program that requires educators to become members of the Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana, and opposes the provision of state funded scholarships/ vouchers for public elementary and secondary school students to attend private and non-public schools.
- 12. LRTA supports repeal of the Government Pension Offset (GPO) and the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) of the Social Security Administration and opposes mandatory Social Security coverage of public employees in Louisiana.

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# IN MEMORIAM

"...THESE IMMORTAL DEAD WHO LIVE AGAIN IN MINDS MADE BETTER BY THEIR PRESENCE"

DECEASED RETIRED TEACHERS
NOVEMBER 7 THROUGH DECEMBER 3

#### District I

Patricia F. Druhan – New Orleans Sharon G. House – New Orleans

#### **District II**

Joseph G. Fakier – Thibodaux Mary L. Freeman – Metairie Alton H. Giorgio – Kenner Beverly N. Jacobs – Metairie Yolanda D. Jones – Raceland Lottie Louisia Lauro – Kenner Cheryl M. LeBoeuf – Houma Laura Lowrance – Harvey Dorothy Mae Reed – Harvey Florence Rivette – River Ridge Theresa J. Savoie – Houma Louise R. Williams – Harvey

#### District III

Melvin E. Brown – Walker
Frances C. Costa – Independence
Claire J. Cowart – Covington
Thomas V. Flair – Folsom
Hal R. Hopson – Slidell
Harry D. McIntyre – Franklinton
James B. Morrow – Ponchatoula
Amy E. Touchstone – Abita Springs

#### **District IV**

Billie L. Andrews – Baton Rouge
Frances W. Beck – Baton Rouge
Barbara R. Brownfield – Baton Rouge
Arie Chapman – Clinton
Hazel M. Clarke – Baton Rouge
Carmen K. Cook – Prairieville
Olin K. Dart, Jr. – Baton Rouge
Jeffery L. Faulk – Central
Josephine J. Huff – Baker
John B. Jones – Baton Rouge
Alice L. Kopsa – Baton Rouge
Carrie C. Macalusa – Baton Rouge
Elizabeth P. Reinhardt – Baton Rouge
Angelena Donald Scott – Baton Rouge

#### **District V**

Randell E. Boyd – New Iberia
Jeanelle Griffin – Lafayette
Alice S. Lazaro – Lafayette
Felice C. Miller – New Iberia
Charlene J. Moody – Carnecro
Claud W. Moody, Jr. – Eunice
Celine E. G. Nails – Morgan City
Shirley M. Phillips – St. Martinville
Mercedes B. Pillette – Carencro
Linda M. Thomas – Chataignier
Dolly Trappey - Carencro

#### **District VI**

Esther M. Fondel – Lake Charles Evelyn B. Fontenot – Church Point Julia Mae Guillory – Church Point Jack B. Liles – Lake Charles Ruby L. Skinner – DeQuincy Arthur Tolson – Lake Charles

#### **District VII**

Margaret Davis – Boyce Ann B. Lanclos – Pineville Paula C. Paul – Monterey Robert R. Perry – Alexandria Linda R. Simmons – Leesville Joseph P. Tullier – Dry Prong

#### **District VIII**

Don William Austin, Jr. – Heflin Steward G. Collins – Mansfield Trecia J. Ingram – Zwolle Gloria Faye Tison – Natchitoches

#### **District X**

Kenneth Bridges – Monroe Anne Adams Clifton – Sterlington Dorothy E. Crunk – Monroe Willie B. Ford – Grambling Jimmie L. Grant – Columbia Vera A. Grant – Columbia Jerriedine F. Hester – Monroe Janice Sharp Jackson – Monroe Harold F. Lewing – Monroe Alice Littleton – Downsville Bernice C. Mack - Ruston

#### **District XI**

Evelyn Coleman – Haughton
Merdis L. Holyfield – Homer
Wilma O. Johnson – Athens
Gillie Jean Kruithof – Bossier City
Frederick L. LeBlanc – Bossier City
Versia W. Moore – Plain Dealing
Eldon W. Pentecost – Bossier City
Hamilton Ross – Shreveport
Ruby P. Salter – Gibsland
Trudy H. Smith – Minden
Bronwyn D. Smotherman – Minden
Earnestine Tate – Homer
Jacqueline Thurmon – Shreveport
Randall J. Webb – Shreveport

#### **Out of State**

Alberta Spears Barker – Sarasota, FL James S. Boyd – Waskom, TX Rufus C. Carter – Houston, TX Carolie Clark – Charlotte, NC Ruth B. Creech – Stamford, CT Doris M. Deckard – Powder Springs, GA

Annie M. Dudley – Conroe, TX Mary V. Faison – Waldorf, MD Brenda J. B. Fullen – Beaumont, TX Mary B. Harris – Irving, TX Johnny R. Johnson – Florence, AL Shirley Mae Kenworthey – Picayune, MS

Stella Lee – Baytown, TX Constance W. Milanes – Rosenberg, TX

Merlin M. Ohmer – Jacksonville, FL Joyce B. Stephens – Baltimore, MD Joyce M. Wagner – Newnan, GA James O. White – New Braunfels, TX JANUARARY/FEBRUARY 2016 Page

#### LRTA AROUND THE STATE



Future Governor John Bel Edwards recently spoke in Bogalusa on his platform of proposals to actively support Louisiana retired teachers and the state public education system. (Left to Right) Alva Martin, Bogalusa Retired Teachers Association (BRTA) president and Edwards.



Bogalusa Retired Teachers Association (BRTA) recently held their local unit meeting on September 17, 2015, at Western Sizzlin'. Guest speaker was Senator Ben Nevers, who was also honored for his many years of legislative support for retired teachers and to public education. From left to right: Mary Smith, BRTA treasurer; Lillian Porter, BRTA 2nd vice president; Alva Martin, BRTA president; Senator Ben Nevers; Bertha Breland, state 1st vice president; Lazette Watterson, District III president; Virginia Carroll, BRTA secretary.



Representative Sam Jones and LRTA President James T. Stewart discuss the merits of supporting COLA legislation during the 2016 Regular Session.

## 14 REASONS WHY YOU SHOULD JOIN LRTA & YOUR LOCAL UNIT

LRTA:

- 1. Represents the interests of Louisiana's retired education community on proposals considered by the TRSL board of trustees, by the Louisiana legislature, and by the U.S. Congress.
- 2. Supports annual permanent benefit increases (PBIs) for eligible benefit recipients.
- 3. Will continue to work with legislative leaders and committees to increase the level of benefits for oldest retirees and to review methods for granting future PBIs from the Employee Experience Account.
- 4. Is working toward obtaining legislative appropriations to pay down the IUAL.
- 5. Supports appropriate levels of health insurance coverage for retirees through the Office of Group Benefits and local school boards.
- 6. Provides current information about LRTA on www.lrta.net.
- 7. Provides six newsletters mailed to all members each year.
- 8. Supports repeal of Social Security Administration benefit offsets known as GPO and WEP.
- 9. Opposes changes in the current governance, administrative, and benefit structure of TRSL.
- 10. Opposes mandatory Social Security coverage of Louisiana's actively employed educators.
- 11. Maintains a staffed state office to coordinate state activities.
- 12. Works with district and local units to provide programs and information.
- 13. Provides a member benefits package through Association Member Benefits Advisors.
- 14. There is no other association that works exclusively for Louisiana's retired education community.

# 2016 SPRING MEETING IN ALEXANDRIA

The 2016 LRTA Spring Meeting, to be held April 26 and 27, will return to the newly-reopened Holiday Inn in downtown Alexandria.

**Topics** discussed at our Spring Meeting include updates from TRSL and OGB. We will also provide timely information on retirement legislation. Finally, NRTA will present valuable information on recruitment and volunteerism.

The hotel, located at 701 Fourth St., has recently undergone extensive renovations, and LRTA will host one of the first meetings to be held in the new facility.

A special hotel convention group room rate of \$97 per night, plus tax, has been negotiated with the Holiday Inn.

Cut-off date for this special rate is April 11, or until

rooms sell out; so make your reservations early! To make a room reservation, call the hotel directly at 877-834-3613. Be sure to ask for the special LRTA convention rate. Use the form at the bottom of this page to preregister for attendance at the Spring Meeting.

On-site registration will be available, but attendance at the pre-convention dinner on April 26, where Name

of Fame honorees will be featured, and the luncheon on April 27, where LRTA state officers will be installed, are by pre-reservation only.

Pre-registration will ensure you receive a packet with a pre-printed name tag and other meeting materials.

# REGISTER TODAY!

#### **LRTA STAFF**

Rodney R. Watson
Executive Director
Renée M. Siccone
Assistant Director
Ann S. Reed
Membership Services Coordinator
Delia Richardson
Public Relations/Communications

Coordinator

#### OTHER IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS

TRSL (Retirement Benefits and Check)	. 225.925.6446
Toll-free (outside of Baton Rouge area)	. <b>877.275.8775</b>
Office of Group Benefits	225.925.6625
Toll-free (outside of Baton Rouge area)	. 800.272.8451
Association Member Benefits Advisors (AMBA)	. 800.258.7041
LRTA Office	225.927.8837
Toll-free (outside of Baton Rouge area)	. <b>888.531.1992</b>
Fax	225.927.8838

#### 2016 SPRING MEETING PRE-REGISTRATION / MEAL RESERVATION FORM

Please use this form to pre-register for the 2016 Spring Meeting in order to expedite registration in Alexandria. To make a reservation for the pre-convention dinner on Tuesday, April 26, and/or for the luncheon on Wednesday, April 27, indicate in the space provided and send a check for the appropriate amount. **Each person pre-registering and/or reserving a meal ticket should return a separate form** in order to receive a registration packet. Guests may use the form in order to receive a registration packet. (Photocopies acceptable.)

Name:	
Address:	
City, State, Zip:	
Telephone: ( E-mail	
Attendance only, no fee	
Number of tickets for Tuesday night Pre-Convention Dinner (\$30.00 per person) = (beef hamburger steak)	\$
Number of tickets for Wednesday luncheon (\$26.00 per person) =	\$
(smoked chicken)	Total Enclosed = \$

Note: Pre-registration/meal reservations must be received in the LRTA office by **April 15, 2016**. Registration will be available at the meeting; however, meal function tickets are sold by pre-reservation only. **No meal reservations will be taken by phone. NO REFUNDS AFTER APRIL 20.** Mail forms and checks to LRTA, 9412 Common St., Suite 5, Baton Rouge, LA 70809.