

NSEA-Retired 2013-14 Annual Report

Roger Rea, NSEA-Retired President

Membership continues to grow

NSEA-Retired continues to be the fastest growing membership group in the NSEA family. As of February 2014, our retired membership stands at 5,315, an increase of 247 over last year's membership for a membership growth of 4.9 percent. In addition, we have 558 pre-retired subscribers. Pre-retired subscribers are individuals who will be lifetime members of NSEA-Retired when they retire without paying additional dues to the retired organizations. NSEA-Retired is the only statewide, retired organization that guarantees continuation of NSEA services for retired educators and access to NEA member benefits. Contact Maureen Nickels at maureen.nickels@nsea.org for information about pre-retired or retired life membership in NSEA-Retired, or visit our web page, www.nsea.org/retired and click on the *Join Now* link on the left of the page.

Retirement Information Seminars Offered

NSEA-Retired offers an excellent pre-retirement seminar for active local associations throughout the state. The seminar has been presented more than 200 times in the last 10 years to more than 7,700 members. Contact your NSEA District President, Local Association President, your NSEA-Retired District Director, or NSEA-Retired President Roger Rea, rrea68154@yahoo.com, for more information, or to arrange a seminar for your local.

Medicare and EHA Information Seminars Provide Needed Guidance

NSEA-Retired has conducted seminars on the basics of Medicare as well as information on **NSEA-Retired BlueSenior Classic**, the Medicare supplement that is endorsed by NSEA-Retired and underwritten by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska for several years. Attendance at one of the five Medicare seminars held in 2013 totaled 310. The Medicare seminars brought information about making the transition to Medicare, as well as how to use the Medicare website to select an appropriate Medicare Part D provider for prescription medication. Information on Medicare was also provided during our two min-conferences. For the past four years, NSEA-Retired has partnered with the Educators Health Alliance to host information seminars across the state on the new EHA insurance options for pre-65 retirees. In 2013, we had 246 members and spouses attend the information seminars. The total attendance at these seminars for the past four years has been 718. More information on making the transition to Medicare as well as the handouts for both the Medicare and pre-65 EHA seminars held in 2013 can be found on the NSEA-Retired web site, www.nsea.org/retired.

Mentoring Project Provides Help for First-year Teachers

NSEA-Retired has a nationally-recognized Intergenerational Mentoring Project to provide assistance to first-year teachers in making the transition from full-time student to full-time teacher. Now in its 11th year, this program pairs first-year teachers with retired educators across the state. First-year teachers say that the experience of a retired educator enhances their confidence to do an outstanding job in the classroom. Retired educators

say that the experience re-invigorates their minds and helps them keep their connection with the classroom. NSEA-Retired is looking for retirees who are willing to participate as mentors. Contact either your NSEA-Retired District Director or the SEAN leadership to get more information. To request a mentor application brochure, contact Maureen Nickels at maureen.nickels@nsea.org.

NSEA-Retired Awards Three Scholarships to SEAN Members

Three \$1,000 scholarships are awarded by NSEA-Retired to members of the Student Education Association of Nebraska (SEAN) each year. Applications for these scholarships are available to students during their student teaching semester in every teacher training institution in the state. Contact your campus SEAN leadership or the SEAN web page, www.nsea.org/SEAN, for more information and for application forms.

Keeping Our Members Informed

NSEA-Retired uses both print and electronic media to inform our members of important events and activities of the association. *The Advocate*, the newsletter for NSEA-Retired, as well as *The Corner*, the column that appears in each issue of NSEA's monthly magazine, *The Voice*, have both won national awards for excellence. *The Advocate* is edited by Tom Black, and *The Corner* is edited by Renae Kelly. You may suggest story ideas to Tom at wpc6296@cableone.net, or to Renae at renaerkelly@gmail.com. Check out the NSEA-Retired website at www.nsea.org/retired. The website is frequently updated, and keeps our members informed about issues of importance. Registration for NSEA-Retired activities is conducted through the website. Contact John Jensen, who maintains the content of the website, at jensen.omaha@gmail.com.

NSEA-Retired Lobby Day Successful

More than 50 NSEA-Retired members and guests signed up to come to the Unicameral in February to share information with Senators on maintaining state funding for public education and consideration of an elimination of the state income tax on Social Security benefits. Bad weather limited the actual attendance. Sen. Galen Hadley, chairman of the Revenue Committee, gave the luncheon address on Lobby Day.

Mini Conferences Attract Retired Educators

Two "mini conferences" were held this year for NSEA-Retired members. The Culinary Arts Center on the Metro Community College Campus at Fort Omaha was the site of the fall conference, and Younes Conference Center in Kearney was the site for the spring conference this year. The agenda for the conferences included keynote speakers, a business meeting, and break-out sectionals on various topics of interest to retired educators.

NSEA-Retired Elections

NSEA-Retired elected a new president; vice president; district directors for Capitol, Elkhorn and Sandhills; 18 delegates to NSEA Delegate Assembly; and six delegates to NEA Representative Assembly this spring. In October 2013, the NSEA-Retired Board approved a change to the Bylaws that would allow members of the NSEA-Retired Board

of Directors to serve up to three consecutive three-year terms on the board in any single position.

Coalition on Tax Reform

NSEA-Retired is working with various labor groups and organizations representing retirees across the state to investigate ways to make Nebraska more “retiree friendly.” Nebraska has a higher tax burden on retirement incomes than any of our surrounding states, and ranks among the least favorable places to retire according to several sources. The Legislative Tax Modernization Committee held public hearings in Scottsbluff, North Platte, Norfolk, Omaha and Lincoln to get input from citizens on their recommendations for tax reform. NSEA-Retired helped coordinate testimony at all five sites. The Revenue Committee introduced LB987 in response to the hearings. LB987 would index income tax brackets for inflation and would exempt part of Social Security income from state income tax. Members of the coalition, including NSEA-Retired, testified at the hearing for this bill.