

**South Dakota  
Retired School  
Personnel  
Association**

# Newsletter

**“To Serve, Not to be Served.”**

www.SDRTA.net • Affiliated with National Retired Teachers Association • November Vol. 48 No. III

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## So Proud of Cathy and Mike!

It was a proud night for members of South Dakota Retired School Personnel at Cedar Shores in Oacoma September 30 when the announcements of the 2015 Andrus Award and President’s Award were made. AARP- SD President Dennis Elnach, Pierre, made the presentations at the annual Volunteer Event.

The Andrus Award for community service is AARP’s most prestigious and visible volunteer award. Only one volunteer per state can receive this award each year. Cathy Anderson of Sioux Falls “fills the bill” perfectly as the winner of this award is to be someone who shares experience, talent and skills to enrich their communities in ways that are consistent with AARP’s mission, vision and commitment to volunteer service that inspires others to volunteer. She is president of the Sioux Falls Retired School Personnel, chair of the Respect Life committee and a member of her choir. Some of Cathy’s volunteering has been providing treats to first responders, helping at the Bishop Dudley and Ronald McDonald Houses, Salvation Army and packing back packs for needy students.

The winner of the President’s Award is chosen because of his/her influence as a role model to those who have a vision to see what is needed and the motivation to get things done. The President’s Award winner, Mike West of Philip, is most deserving as he serves in many capacities in his home town. He has served as mayor, and during his term, he appointed the first woman to the city council. Mike is a role model for community members to become involved with committees and projects. Some projects that he, along with his wife Marcia, have led are the restoration of an old school house and the cemetery structure which houses the history of the cemetery. Mike serves on the Executive Council of AARP and is the treasurer and legislative chair of the Philip Area Retired School Personnel.

Congratulations to Cathy Anderson and Mike West. You make our association proud, but you would also make our founder, Dr. Ethel Percy Andrus, very proud!



ABOVE: Mike West & Dennis Elnach  
BELOW: Cathy Anderson & Dennis Elnach



**Lobby Day in Pierre**  
January 27, 2016

**State Convention**  
May 3-4 • Pierre Ramkota

# Unit Leaders and News:

**ABERDEEN** – Contact Ron Johnson, ronjohnson15@abe.midco.net, 605.225.7968

**BLACK HILLS** – Co-Presidents, Kande Snoozy, Iksnoozy@aol.com, 605-388-0328 and Becky Fisher, scuttle29@hotmail.com, 605.721.3312

Our program theme this year is “Living Across Our Lifespan”. Rob Wylie discussed our retirement system at our September meeting. Members brought food and other necessities for member, Pat Zent’s mission in helping the homeless. A social worker from Rapid City Regional talked about mental health at our October meeting. We will contribute to United Way and will help with “Feeding SD” in October.

**BROOKINGS** – President Nancy Fixen, nfixen@itctel.com, 605.693.4075

**HURON AREA**- Co-Presidents Keitha Neuharth, kneuharth@santel.net, 605.350.3251 and Bev Erdahl, lberd@hur.midco.net, 605.352.4746  
We enjoyed having the Zubkes of Watertown visit our “First Day of School” luncheon in Huron on September 8th. I’m sure they influenced some of the recently retired teachers to join our HARSP unit. We had an excellent program in Sept. on “Heirlooms in the Garden of Life”. Our next presentation opened some eyes about “Adult Abuse”. We are looking forward to hearing Bob Glanzer, former banker and author of “You Can’t Unring A Bell”, speak to us of his experiences.

**MADISON AREA** – President Elaine Brown, elbro@goldenwest.net, 605.351.5492  
Our group met at the Prairie Village Library in June with special guest, Bella Maxwell, winner of the 2015 AARP Grandparent Essay Contest. Bella read her composition and received the first place medal she won for her accomplishment. On August

3rd our group partnered with Golden Living and Mills Property Management in Madison to serve The Gathering, a ministry of the Madison United Methodist Church that includes a Monday evening meal and fellowship. Several members cleaned the Prairie Village Library in preparation for the annual Jamboree Days, August 28-30, and also served as hostesses during the event. Our September get together at Rocky Run Golf Course in Dell Rapids included a membership challenge for every person to invite perspective members.

**MILBANK AREA** – President Rhonda Preller, rrpel@aol.com, 605.438.4388  
Our Milbank Area Retired Teachers (MARTA) “hit the ground running” as a new year began! We volunteered at Mercy Meals (AKA Orphan Grain Train) and packaged 400 bags of food. Our Hawaiian Kick-off supper was well attended in August and we enjoyed chatting with visitors, Bill and Cathy Zubke. In September, MARTA members had a Book Drive for our local library, participated with an entry in the Homecoming Parade and enjoyed a presentation featuring Steve Misener, collector of historic pianos. October found MARTA spearheading a new program, Students of the Month, at our elementary school. Teachers nominate a child from each classroom and those children are featured on a bulletin board with their picture and brief write up.

**MITCHELL AREA** – Contact Emily Bickett, ebickett@mit-tel.net; 605-996-6905

**NORTHERN HILLS** – President Bob Schneider, rschneider@rushmore.ccom, 605.722.7712  
Our Northern Hills Retired School Personnel unit’s fall meeting opened with a potluck lunch and entertaining program featuring a theater performance by the “Bukit Litz Players”. At the business meeting, with

thirty members in attendance, NHRSP Bylaws were updated to be in compliance with the SDRSP association’s name change. Joanna Jones reviewed the 2014-2015 SDRTA’s Community Service about how the volunteers served their communities in imaginative ways. Joanna also encouraged our members to promote the Grandparent Essay Contest. Della Hall called the members’ attention to legislative issues concerning the South Dakota Retirement System.

**OAHE (Mobridge Area)** – President Fay Jackman, fay.jackman@gmail.com; 605-850-8421  
The Mobridge group lost its president Brain Liedtke to matrimony. Brian will be married in November, and we are very happy for him and his new bride. They are moving to Minnesota.

**PHILIP AREA** – President Marcia West, cmmwest@gwtc.net, 605.859.2213  
The unit is finalizing the Philip Cemetery project with a dedication to be held during Scotty Philip Days next June. A Christmas tree will be put at the Haakon County Courthouse Parade of Trees. We will do contributions to the Country Cupboard Food Pantry for the holiday baskets.

**PIERRE AREA**- Co-Presidents, Margaret Ellefson, margknut@pie.midco.net, and Lu Heibel, vennieh@pie.midco.net  
The Pierre unit continues to meet at various times of the day at several different venues in an effort to give back to the community. Prior to the opening of school, members donated a large framed portrait of President John F. Kennedy to the new Kennedy Elementary School. Ushering for Pierre Players’ productions is the newest volunteer project for PARSP. Fall programs are “Renovation of Hyde Stadium”, “The Aging Eye” and an art show featuring the artistic talents of

all retired school personnel and spouses.

**REDFIELD AREA** – Co-Presidents Arlie Rodman, arlier@abe.midco.net, 605.472.0225 and Gerri Schutte, gerri\_schutte2@hotmail.com • 605.472.2142  
Redfield Retired School Personnel kicked off the September meeting working on membership. To date we have taken in two new members and a quite positive response from several others. Redfield School Superintendent Shad Storley spoke to our group about the Redfield School proposed building project. We will continue to support the Mission Nutrition project helping pack bags of food sent home with needy students on Friday.

**SIoux FALLS** – President Cathy Anderson, cander451@msn.com, 605.338.7053  
Sioux Falls is again a targeted community for AARP’s “Community Presence”. Many local organizations are supported with financial assistance and gifts to the needy. Other projects include SOS (Supply Our Students) backpacks, working at Pioneer Lane and providing treats on 9/11 to fire fighters and police. Upcoming programs will be on an Indian Mission School, “Feed the Hungry” and a holiday sing-a-long, as well as a school music group entertainment. Money will be collected for games for Family Connection, a program that helps families of inmates stay connected.

**SOUTHEAST AREA (Vermillion)** – Co-Presidents Sharon Donahoe, sdonahoe@midco.net, 605.658.0319 and JoAnn Stockland, jstockland@hotmail.com  
On September 16th, 18 members of our group met to renew friendships and memberships. The leader of our Vermillion Weekend Backpack Program, John Lushbough, informed us on this volunteer project to

## Get Well Wishes to President Betty Beyer ~

Betty recently had hip surgery and is recovering at home in Aberdeen. All across the state people are cheering for you and sending get well wishes!



## Conference Report:

by Kay Ainslie, Vice-President

I attended NRTA's National Advocacy Conference in Arlington, VA Sept. 28 – October 1. Ninety people were there representing 47 associations across the country. It was very informative and fun. I got to meet a lot of people and got to take a 2 hour tour of Washington, DC. Tuesday we learned about Social Security and that in 11 states the teachers elected to do their own retirement instead of Social Security. For most of them it seems to be working, but in some they have nothing. Wednesday I met with Senators Mike Rounds, Kristi Noem and John Thune in the conference room of the Russell Building. I visited with

Mike Rounds and John Thune and gave them a paper listing the objectives of SDRSP and talked to them about Social Security. Governor Dugaard was also there but I didn't visit with him. We listened to a representative of the Democrat and Republican parties on their view of the race for Presidency. We also heard a speaker from AARP. Thank you for letting me go as your representative.



## Membership:

by Bill Zubke, President Elect/Co-Membership

Sometimes, it's all about memory. And exercise.

Life members are a strong base for our organization, but once they are "lifers", we have a tendency to take them for granted. Maybe they've moved away or are incapable of attending for whatever reason. Here's your first exercise. **Reach out** to each of your life members and thank them for providing that base. The result? They will feel better and you will have re-established a vital contact.

Some retirees weren't ready to join our organization. Memories of their "no thanks" linger. But it's later...and they've had

a chance to sow their "not for me" oats. Exercise number two. Re-contact them. Invite them to join you for a meeting. **Reaching out** is a great form of exercise!

Some members may have simply fallen away. Maybe there were problems. Maybe they found other interests. Exercise number three. Bring them back to the fold. **Work** on programs that titillate and entertain. Personally contact them. **Exercise** your charm!

Every new member is a god-send. But restoring those that may have "escaped"? Why that must be an exercise called "re-member"! Know you are loved!

## Boost Your Brainpower!

by Joanna Jones, Com. Service/Health Chair

When we think of brainpower, we usually think about reading books, writing letters, playing cards, doing Sudoku and crossword puzzles. They are important to preserving brain functions, but 30 minutes of physical exercise keeps the brain healthy. Research on brain health reported in the June 2015 AARP Bulletin suggested that exercise can increase brain volume. People older than 65 years showed more brain benefits from exercise than those people ages 55 to 65. Exercise positively transforms the health of both the body and the brain.

Now - Sit up straight. Posture affects our thinking process. Prove it by doing math

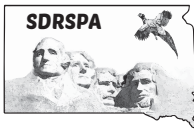
in your head while slouching, looking at the floor and letting your mouth hang open. Then do the mental math while sitting up straight, keeping your mouth closed and looking forward or slightly upwards. You'll notice that it's easier to think with the latter posture. (<http://www.mindpowernews.com/BrainPower.htm>)

As the weather chills, we, who are not gym members, need to keep our brains active. We are concerned about staying sharp, being healthy and meeting challenges. Maybe you saw the article in Parade magazine, "23 Ways to Boost Your Brainpower." (<http://parade.com/426913/lisamulcahy/23-ways-to-boost-your-brain/>)

One suggestion was to Write. It tells our

memory what is important, so we recall things more easily. Using red ink also improves short term memory. The writing process clarifies thinking. It is a way to exercise our creativity and analytical ability. Write your Reminiscent Teacher Essay today or complete the Storytelling vignette for convention that is due in May. Boost your brain power by writing. (<http://www.mindpowernews.com/BrainPower.htm>)

If you're not a technology driven senior, invite the grandchildren over and ask them to review the sites with you. Just look up Brain Power on Google or check out Brain Game Puzzles for a challenge; and you'll be busy until spring.



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**SDRTA.net**

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**



**NOTE FROM DIANA GLOVER**

Volunteer Executive Director

*Without a newsletter editor on our state board at the moment, I chose to do this shortened version of our fall newsletter. The format for unit leaders and news is blended, and you will see a few other temporary changes. You can read it all on one cup of coffee this time instead of two!*

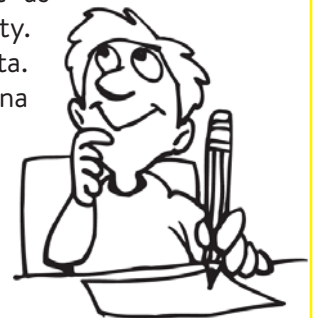
**Reminders:**

**TEACHER STORIES:** It is always time for members of SDRSP to write their teaching history. Each written story is called a Reminiscent Teacher essay on our website. If you have not written one, please consider doing so this year. It may be only a few paragraphs or up to 4 pages in length. If you have written your essay, please encourage others to do the same. You may read essays of past years on [sdrta.net](http://sdrta.net).

**SCHOLARSHIPS:** As in the past few years, our association will again award a \$1000 scholarship to two South Dakota teachers who are working on national certification or advanced study. An interested applicant can check out "Scholarships" on our web page,

[www.sdrta.net](http://www.sdrta.net) and submit the application online. This past year two teachers from Watertown were the scholarship winners.

**GRANDPARENT ESSAYS:** Soon it will be time to engage in the "Grandparent of the Year" essay contest for 5th graders. Each unit organizes the contest as it best works in their community. Check out the guidelines on [sdrta.net](http://sdrta.net). The contest chair is Donna Fisher who has a new address and phone number: 2209 Burleigh, Apt. 109, Yankton, SD 57708, 605-661-2616.



**UNIT NEWS CONTINUED**

feed the children and youth of our six local schools. It was eye-opening to find that 220 food bags were delivered each Friday. At our October 14th meeting, 15 members heard Ray Ring, our district state representative, give a fascinating, but frightening, Power Point presentation showing the true statistical effect of South Dakota's low teacher salary in comparison with the nation and with neighboring states, even when the lower cost of living in SD and the lack of income tax, are considered. He showed that over the years since 1995, SD is sliding farther and farther behind, even when all factors are considered. (He

would be willing to share his information with other nearby units.)

**WATERTOWN AREA –**

President Denise Ottenbacher, [denise8087@gmail.com](mailto:denise8087@gmail.com), 605.882.2295

Sixty-seven members attended Watertown Area Retired School Personnel's (WARSP) August picnic and tour of the new middle school. In September members met at the Bramble Park Zoo to hear about what is happening there and to tour the zoo's new exhibits. The Young Entrepreneurs' Academy presented at the Oct. meeting.

**WINNER AREA –** Co-Presidents Trena Vandenbark, 605.840.4517

and Donna Brozik, [mdbrozik@gwtc.net](mailto:mdbrozik@gwtc.net), 605.840.4517  
We had our first meeting of the year on Sept. 16th. The theme of the meeting was volunteerism. Along with our continuing schoolhouse at the local museum and nursing home bulletin board projects, four new projects were discussed. Committees of three were formed without members overlapping. We will be helping with the newly set up school backpack program, supervising bingo and cards at the nursing home, cleaning up a weedy area at the Senior Center and reading books about local history to senior citizens. These projects will keep us serving and not being served.

**YANKTON AREA –** President Joyce Maggied, [maggied34@vyn.midco.net](mailto:maggied34@vyn.midco.net), 605.665.7977  
The Yankton Unit has officially changed its name to Yankton Area Retired School Personnel. We met in September with a program on "Fraud and Identity Theft", and in October with a presentation by a registered dietician who spoke on "Eat This; Not That". We will meet November 5th with a program by County Commissioner Todd Woods on current county issues including NAPA Junction. We will then take a winter break and meet again in April. Service projects will continue, and we will encourage our members to meet informally for monthly coffees during the break.