FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Dear ORTA Members,

On Tuesday, March 27, board members gathered in Columbus at the ORTA conference room for the 2018 ORTA Spring Board meeting. As in the past, the spring rains blessed us that morning, however, by late afternoon it cleared up and the sun shone. ORTA liaisons gathered from all five regions with near perfect attendance!

After morning refreshments and a welcoming from the Executive Committee members, the newly appointed liaisons were formally installed to their new positions. Following the usual business formalities, the liaisons gathered to discuss their concerns for each of their regions and their plans for ways to share ORTA information with the chapter officers of their regions. Some very productive conversation came out of this sharing session. I believe each of the five regions have chosen a date and place to hold their regional meetings, and they have made arrangements to have the Executive Director or one of the Executive Committee members present at their meeting. They are very excited to share new ideas for increasing membership statewide and encouraging fresh leadership in the state chapters. I encourage you all to make it a good day and a great meeting!

Here, I'll again put in a plug for the Southeast Region of Ohio! We are still in search of someone to take the liaison position for the Pike, Scioto, Jackson, Lawrence, Galia, and Meigs County area. For more information, please call me at 740-622-7559. I'd love to hear from you!

At the board meeting, we voted in favor of supporting the “membership incentive program,” which encourages chapters to increase their membership by at least 10% a year. Once a chapter has met this challenge, that chapter receives $100 to go toward any program or project they may choose. The chapter gaining the highest percentage of membership in the state also receives a greater amount at the end of the year. The ORTA office will check your membership status as of January 1, 2018 and calculate the growth by December 31, 2018. You will be informed of the results in January 2019. Make it a great year and best wishes as you grow your membership!

Another item voted upon at the board meeting was a motion to waive dues for any ORTA member 90 years old or older. This motion passed unanimously! We’re so pleased to lend a hand to our dedicated senior members!

(con’d on next page)
Finally, during this board meeting we asked the liaisons to select one of the state committees to serve on or chair for 2018-2019. These committees are as follows:

- Legislative Committee
- Finance Committee
- Membership & Pre-retirement Committee
- PR/Technology/Communications Committee
- Protective/Community Services Committee
- Organizational (Bylaws/Nominating) Committee

These committees are open to all ORTA members! If you have an interest in serving on any one of these committees, please contact the ORTA office. We encourage you to share your ideas and information with the other ORTA members state-wide.

Although April Fool’s Day has passed, here are two appropriate quotes from Mark Twain to share:
“Let us be thankful for the fools. But for them the rest of us could not succeed,”
“The first of April is the day we remember what we are the other 364 days of the year.”

Enjoy the signs of “SPRINTER!” (See the March Newsletter :) )

Yours truly,
Bee Lehner, 2018 ORTA President

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**HAVE YOU PAID YOUR YEARLY ORTA DUES?**

A friendly reminder that if you need to renew your ORTA dues ($30), now is the time!

You can now pay online (click here) with credit card, making it faster and more convenient than ever. We can of course still accept checks mailed to the office at:

**8050 N. High Street**
**Suite 190**
**Columbus, Ohio 43235**

Your membership is important! We are here to serve you. Your membership helps keep us going, so we want to say thank you for your loyalty to ORTA, and we wouldn’t be here without YOU.

*PLEASE SEE THE BACK PAGE TO FILL OUT YOUR RENEWAL DUES FORM TO SEND TO US WITH YOUR CHECK PAYMENT*
THOUGHTS FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR...

Salutations from ORTA to our Faithful Membership!
As most schools have concluded their Spring Breaks and teachers are back at it with the business of educating our children, let’s all remember to keep the active teachers in our thoughts and prayers as the school year winds down. Not only do they have to be concerned with standardized tests, it seems as though educators are now ‘first responders’ when it comes to keeping children safe in schools. I guess I retired at the right time!

STRS News

Although the loss of COLA stings mightily, STRS recipients need look no farther than Kentucky to see how bad things could get. In Kentucky, it seems as though pensioners are being attacked by those very people that ‘promised’ one thing only to break that promise. The governor and his allies are blaming teachers for the horrific mess their pension system is in. What is worse is the fact that the people who work for the Kentucky Retired Teachers System are jumping ship at an alarming rate. I know that many of us (myself included) have been critical of decisions made at STRS, and one thing is for sure: our system is in good shape. Our investments are strong and STRS is not in any danger of financial collapse. If you research teachers’ retirement systems around the country, you will find that STRS ranks in the upper quadrant of systems in terms of benefits and financial solvency. I am told that the healthcare system is also in great shape, currently. What is next is watching what next year’s premiums will be. Those rates will be discussed and hopefully established after the June STRS meeting.

ORTA’s Spring Board Meeting

ORTA’s Board met on March 27, 2018 here at the ORTA Board office. The Executive Committee, along with Regional Liaisons from all regions met for the first time under the newly reorganized ORTA bylaws. The meeting was conducted smoothly with a great deal of input from the Regional Liaisons. One important outcome of this meeting was the establishment of Regional Meetings. Local officers from each chapter will be invited to a meeting to be held in each region to exchange ideas for the organization and to see what ORTA can do for each region. The unapproved minutes of this meeting are on the website; however, please remember, these have not been approved yet.

Membership News

Something that may be of interest to ORTA members and Local RTAs are recent changes to ORTA’s membership policies. First, the ORTA Board approved a new policy that waives membership fees to any member who reaches 90 years of age. Second, ORTA is sponsoring a membership incentive. Each Local Chapter that increases its membership in ORTA by 10% (or more) will receive $100 from ORTA for their local chapter. Yet another ‘change’ at ORTA deals with membership. ORTA’s policy on membership has been clarified in the following way... When a person joins ORTA their individual membership is good for 1 year. During the month in which their membership expires, ORTA sends a reminder that their membership is expiring, and it is time to renew. Members are informed that they can call the office, send in their dues payment or join ORTA through their Local Chapter. ORTA is hopeful that the options are good for the individual member. Local RTAs have asked if they should continue to collect ORTA dues and send them to ORTA. The answer is ‘Yes’ if that is what the Local RTA wishes to do.
ORTA recognizes that many Local Chapters like to collect all dues (both Local and ORTA dues) from their members. This is acceptable and a valuable service to ORTA. The bottom line is ORTA does not want to complicate membership matters for any Local Chapter.

Chapter Officers List

The most recent list of chapter officers from each Local RTA is posted on the website. I recognize that some Local Chapters have not been updated but wanted to get the list published. If you see corrections that need to be made, please let us know at the ORTA office.

STRS Board of Trustees Election

As you read this newsletter, you probably are aware that there is an election for two STRS Trustee positions. Because both positions that are up for election this year are being elected from ‘active’ STRS members, retirees do not vote on these positions. I have received a couple of questions about this election. ORTA does not typically ‘endorse’ candidates that are active STRS contributors. What is important to ALL STRS people, active and retirees, is that the STRS Board of Trustees are committed to making STRS a safe and comfortable retirement vehicle. How we accomplish that goal includes becoming more engaged in the ‘politics’ of STRS retirement. As the next ‘retiree’ Trustee positions at STRS come up for election ORTA will engage with its members in an attempt to ‘endorse’ any candidates. Because of a fluke in the timing of the addition of the second retired trustee seat on the STRS Board, it turned out that BOTH will be elected at the same time every four years.

Best Regards,
Robin Rayfield

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!!

Do you know an ORTA Centenarian member? In upcoming newsletters, we will be honoring those turning or have turned 100 years or more. Please email birthday information to Alissa at publications@orta.org
MEET YOUR ORTA REGIONAL LIAISONS!

At the ORTA Spring Board Meeting, we officially installed our new ORTA Regional Liaisons. These folks are serving their regions as an ORTA resource, and are here for you!

Check out our “Featured Liaisons” on the next page!

In upcoming newsletters, we will feature a few liaisons from the different regions and their bios.

Pictured Left to Right: Edna Hansen, B.J. Woodruff, Carole Wolfe and Bruce Hodges.

Pictured Left to Right: Michael Ward, Ralph Moon (Not pictured, Becky Cropper and Evelyn Yockey)
Pictured Left to Right:
Kendra Burger and Carol Kinsey; Pictured Below: Stella Hull

Pictured Left to Right:
Kara Medenhall.
Kathy Russell, Ken Moody and Patricia Bateman

Pictured Left to Right:
Brenda Davis and Don Ullmann
APRIL FEATURED LIAISONS:
KEN MOODY (CENTRAL),
B.J. WOODRUFF (NORTHWEST) AND
KENDRA BURGER (NORTHEAST)

Ken Moody has lived in the Central Ohio Region since 1970, and resided in Madison County, Grove City, and now Reynoldsburg. Ken taught for 35 years as a high school educator, mostly government and American history with Madison-Plains Local Schools.

Since retirement in 2005, Ken has been a very active member in the teacher’s association, both as former President of his local association and as an ORTA District 6 co-Director before becoming a Central Region Liaison.

Ken also has become a volunteer manager at the Grove City Food Pantry for over 10 years. He and his wife have just moved to Wesley Ridge Retirement Community in Reynoldsburg. We are excited to have Ken be a part of our Central Liaison team, and helping lead our ORTA members in the region!
B.J. (Betty Jo) Woodruff was born and raised in Sandusky, Ohio, and earned her Bachelor’s Degree from Capital University and her Masters from Wright State University.

During the majority of her teaching career, she worked with 8th grade students in St. Henry. She taught math, health, physical education and developed a psychology class for seniors and juniors. During this time she also coached and played volleyball.

After retiring in February of 2000, she became actively involved with ORTA and her local chapter in Mercer Co. where she’s served as President for over 10 years.

On a personal level, B.J.’s maiden name was Palazzo reflecting her Italian heritage. Her husband passed away in 1982, when her three children were 3, 6 and 11. Ten years later, her middle child, Renee died in a car accident. Today, her oldest daughter lives in Denver, CO. and her son lives in Phoenix, AZ. while B.J. remains in Celina.

B.J. in her spare time, enjoys reading and has a personal goal for reading at least 1 million pages before she dies. What a great goal! She also writes rhymes and usually shares one she’s written for your meeting.

She’s working to publish a small book of rhymes she’s composed called “Glimpses of Life”.

We are excited to have B.J. on the Northwest Liaison team, and helping ORTA members in the region!
Kendra (Gress) Burger was born and raised in Fresno, Ohio (Coshocton County) along with her brother, David Gress. She attended grade school and high school in Fresno, then graduated in 1963 from Baltic High School. Following high school, Kendra attended Malone College and graduated in 1966 with a BS in Elementary Education.

In 1974, she earned her MA in Learning Disabilities from Kent State University and in 1984, she graduated with a second master’s degree in Multi-Handicapped from Walsh College.

Kendra began her teaching career in 3rd grade at West Elementary School in Newcomerstown in the fall of 1966. From here she moved to Huntsville, Alabama to teach first grade. In 1972, she returned to Newcomerstown to start the Learning Disabilities program for that district. In the fall of 1976, she headed to Brunswick, Ohio to teach the Learning Disabilities program there.

In 1977, she came back to Coshocton County, River View Local Schools, to teach Learning Disabilities at Union Elementary for five years. In 1983, she transferred to Claymont Schools in Tuscarawas County to teach in both Trenton Avenue and Eastport Elementary Schools. Kendra retired in 2001 and is very proud to say she taught “special needs kids” for 29 years of her educational career!

Locally, Kendra has been a member of Delta Kappa Gamma and served as president of this organization. She was a 13-year member of the Tuscarawas County MRDD Board, is a member of the Tuscarawas County College Club, and presently serves as chairperson of the book sales for the Community Hospice Garage Sale for Tuscarawas County. Since 2001, Kendra has been a member of the Tuscarawas County Retired Teachers Association, served as District Director in 2017, and now serves Northeast Ohio as a 2-year liaison. Kendra has been a long-standing member of the Shanesville Lutheran Church and serves on the church council and various committees.

Kendra is the proud mother of daughter, Brenda (Mike) Haas and grandmother of her two granddaughters, Elaine, who is a senior at Georgia Tech in Atlanta, GA and Michelle, who is a sophomore at Savannah College of Arts and Designs. Kendra enjoys crafting, traveling, reading, and attending concerts and plays. Since retirement, she has been ushering at the Ohio Star Theater in Sugarcreek, Ohio.

Kendra is passionate about her involvement with ORTA and looks forward to meeting with chapter members whom she has met in the past year and members whom has yet to meet. She likes to project a positive outlook and attitude about life and hopes others will do the same.
## WHAT’S ORTA UP TO?

Take a look at what’s coming up in May around our chapters and where our Executive Director, Executive Committee and Liaisons will be! The calendar is always available on our website. Follow the link to view: [http://www.orta.org/calendar.html](http://www.orta.org/calendar.html)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Event Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wednesday, May 2</strong></td>
<td>11:00am Tucarawas Co. Chapter Meeting</td>
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<td></td>
<td>12:00pm Athens County Retired Teachers Assn. Chapter Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Wednesday, May 9</strong></td>
<td>10:00am ORTA Executive Committee Meeting</td>
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<td>11:30am Mahoning Co. Retired Teachers Assn. Chapter Meeting</td>
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<td>12:00pm Greater Cleveland/Cuyahoga Co. Retired Teachers Assn. Chapter Meeting</td>
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<td><strong>Thursday, May 10</strong></td>
<td>11:30am Huron Co. Retired Teachers Assn. Chapter Meeting</td>
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<td><strong>Friday, May 11</strong></td>
<td>12:00pm Stark Co. Retired Teachers Assn. Chapter Meeting</td>
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<td><strong>Monday, May 14</strong></td>
<td>5:30pm Henry Co. Retired Teachers Assn. Chapter Meeting</td>
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<td><strong>Tuesday, May 15</strong></td>
<td>11:30am Mercer County Retired Teachers Assn. Chapter Meeting</td>
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<td>6:30pm Darke Co. Retired Teachers Assn. Chapter Meeting</td>
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<td><strong>Wednesday, May 16</strong></td>
<td>11:30am Pickaway County Retired Teachers Assn. Meeting</td>
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<td>11:30am Wood County RTA Chapter Mtg</td>
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<td>12:00pm Lorain Co. Retired Teachers Assn.</td>
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<td><strong>Thursday, May 17</strong></td>
<td>9:00am STRS Monthly Meeting</td>
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<td>11:00am Holmes County Chapter Meeting</td>
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<td>11:30am Portage Co. Retired Teachers Assn. Chapter Meeting</td>
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<td></td>
<td>11:30am Meigs Co. Retired Teachers Assn. Chapter Meetings</td>
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<td></td>
<td>12:00pm Ross County Retired Teachers Assn. Meeting</td>
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<td><strong>Friday, May 18</strong></td>
<td>11:00am Harrison Co. Retired Teachers Assn. Chapter Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Tuesday, May 22</strong></td>
<td>11:00am Wayne Co. Retired Teachers Assn. &amp; Ashland Co. Retired Teachers Assn. joint Chapter Meeting</td>
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LAKE CO. CHOOSES 2018 GRANT RECIPIENTS

The Lake County Retired Teachers Association is announcing its 2018 Jean P. Lentz Memorial Active Teachers Grant recipients. They are as follows:

- Scott Soeder, Kirtland Schools, “Reading in the Music Classroom.”
- Janet Sovey, Madison Middle School, “Power Plus Heart Rate Monitor Straps.”

Presentations will be given at the June 12 luncheon, to be held at Coach House in Mentor. Scholarship winners will also receive their awards at this event. Watch for further information as it becomes available in May.

Congratulations to all of the recipients of the grant, from all of us at ORTA!

To learn more about the Lake Co. chapter, please visit their chapter website.

LAUGH OF THE MONTH

Q: What is the latest music craze in the ocean?

A: bubble “rap”!
The **Mahoning County** Retired Teachers celebrated their March lunch and meeting at Drake’s Landing. The new location offered the group a beautiful scenic place to socialize and enjoy a buffet lunch. President Susan Harris welcomed everyone and presented new business to members. Bridget Lackey, a Community Health Educator from Mercy Health, spoke on “Health at Home” and presented each member with a book called *Healthier at Home*.

The May 9th meeting will feature the annual “In Memoriam” presentation of the *John M. Knapick Memorial*, book honoring deceased MRTA members. Earic Barrett, an OSU Extension Agent, will discuss horticulture. The Community service project will be contributions toward “Mission of Love”.

For more information on the Mahoning Co. chapter, please visit their chapter [website](#).

Pictured Left to Right:
President Susan Harris, Phil Butto and speaker Bridget Lackey from Mercy Health

Pictured:
Mahoning Co. members enjoy socializing in the new Dock’s Landing space, along with a buffet lunch
VOLUNTEERING PAYS OFF IN PICKAWAY CO.

Pictured Above: Linda Morrow, Carolyn Seitz, and Carol Reichelderfer and Volunteer Committee Chairwoman, Dianne Boggs.
Upper right pictured: Rick Seeds, special speaker

The Pickaway County RTA held a luncheon meeting March 28, 2018. The program was presented by Pickaway Co. resident Rick Seeds, who spoke of ways to protect our homes, ourselves and children from harm by criminals.

Recognized were three 2017 Community Service Member Volunteers. Awards were given to Linda Morrow, Carolyn Seitz, and Carol Reichelderfer. Community Services Committee Chairman is Dianne Boggs. Pickaway County RTA turned in a total of 5,141 volunteer hours to the ORTA for 2017.

Way to go Pickaway County on the Volunteer hours and service to your communities!

To learn more about Pickaway Co., please visit their chapter website.
Ohio Retired Teachers Association has joined with Education First Credit Union to ensure a strong membership that advocates for your benefits. You can earn up to a lifetime ORTA membership with a qualifying certificate or loan product with some of the best rates in the state!

Get Started Today! When you call or visit be sure to let us know you are an ORTA member!

- Money Market Savings Accounts
- Certificates of Deposit
- Retirement & Investment Services
- New & Used Auto Loans (refinancing is available)
- Mortgages (pre-qualifications are available)
- Home Equity Loans & Lines of Credit
- Visa Credit Cards (no balance transfer fee)
- Free Credit Review

Credit Union
Bonus Rewards -

Earn .25% More On Certificate Accounts

Earn Up To $250 On Home Equity Loans & Mortgages Exclusively For ORTA Members. And Earn Up To A Lifetime ORTA Membership!

ORTA Members who open a new certificate of 36 months or greater, with new money can earn .25% more than the current stated rate. New money means funds not currently on deposit with Education First Credit Union. Mortgage and Home Equity loans are subject to underwriting guidelines. NMLS#11029. Home Equity Loan and Mortgage Loan offers are valid for 1/2 of 1% of the balance of loan, not to exceed $250. Funds will be deposited to Share Account or applied as a closing cost credit. For certificates $25,000—$49,999 you will earn a one year paid ORTA membership. For certificates $50,000—$99,999 you will earn a two-year paid ORTA membership. For certificates greater than $100,000 you will earn a lifetime paid ORTA membership. For home equity loans or mortgages $25,000—$49,999 you will earn a one-year paid ORTA membership. For home equity loans or mortgages $50,000—$99,999 you will earn a two-year paid ORTA membership. For home equity or mortgages $100,000 or greater you will earn a lifetime paid ORTA membership. Some restrictions may apply. Offer is subject to change at any time and without advance notice. Offers cannot be combined with any other credit union offers.

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Huron Co. turns 50!

In March, Huron Co. celebrated 50 years of service and dedication to the area retirees.

Founded in 1968 in New London, with the charter membership at 35, the association in only five years, grew to 65 members. Today, the group is 152 members strong, and includes retirees from Monroeville, New London, South Central, Western Reserve, Bellevue, Norwalk and Willard.

Of 35 members who were in attendance, Max Friend, who had retired in 1979, has been retired the longest. Friend spent six years at Western Reserve and 14 years teaching industrial arts in Galion. Along with Friend’s being the longest retired, Helen Payne has the honor of being the chapter’s oldest member at 95. Payne taught “physical education for girls” for 33 years, along with health, drivers education and social studies. Payne retired in 1986 and says “It was quite a job, but we had fun doing it.”

Among the meeting festivities, over 30 educators whom retired prior to 2000 were honored. Each received a red rose to commemorate their service. Their names, school districts and retirement year are as follows:

- James Beck (Willard, ‘95)
- Ruth Brown (Willard, ‘97)
- Nancy Eden (Willard, ‘99)
- Ruth Griffin (Willard, ‘96)
- Robert Knoll (New London ‘98)
- Harriet Parcher (Huron County Educational Service Center, now North Pt. ESC, ‘99)
- Norma Robson (Western Reserve, ‘95)
- Thomas Robson (Western Reserve, ‘92)
- Jan Bell (Willard, ‘85)
- Peggy Case (Willard, ‘97)
- Evelyn Ferguson (Bellevue, ‘90)
- Francis Johnson (Willard, ‘97)
- Helen Payne (Monroeville, ‘86)
- Cheryl Roshon (New London, ‘99)
- Bonnie Scheerer (Western Reserve, ‘90)
- Linda Shibley (Monroeville, ‘96)
- Barbara Smith (Bellevue, ‘95)
- June Zweidinger (Willard, ‘91)
- Robert Brown (Williard, ‘95)
- Bernice Clevenger (S. Central, ‘90)
- Max Friend (Western Reserve, ‘79)
- Kay Kersey (Norwalk, ‘95)
- Maxine Robinson (Willard, ‘99)
- Joyce Schaefer (Sandusky, ‘95)
- John Schick (Norwalk, ‘98)
- Martha Shafer
- Martha Shafer
- Martha Shafer
- James Van Sickle
- James Van Sickle
- James Van Sickle

ORTA thanks all the honorees for their years of service to the local schools, and continued service with HCRTA.

During the meeting, President Harriet Parcher told the group “Congratulations, we’re 50 years old and we don’t look a day younger.”

Cheers to 50 more wonderful years, Huron Co.! To learn more about the Huron Co. chapter, please visit their web page.
ORTA endorses Vision Service Plan (VSP) for members to receive the eye care you need. VSP is not a traditional plan: no ID cards, no claim forms...just savings! Plus, you’ll have access to a large network of thousands of doctors throughout the nation.

Benefits include:
- WellVision exam and glasses covered every 12 months after copay
- Contact lens exam every 12 months with no copay
- Up to $170 allowance for new frames
- Extra discounts, and more!

To find out more, visit myambabenefits.info/orta or call 800-258-7041

VSP MEMBERS: GET AN EXTRA $40 TO SPEND

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Choose a frame from any of these brands, and $40 will automatically be applied to your purchase when you use your benefits.

Benefits made available through:

AMBA
ASSOCIATION MEMBER BENEFITS ADVISORS
IN MEMORIAM:

ORTA is sad to announce the passing of the following members:

Vera J. Steinhauser, 87, and Linda K. Coe, 69, were both lifetime members of the Pickaway County Chapter and of the Ohio Retired Teachers Association.

We send our deepest condolences to the families and loved ones as we share in their memory.

*Do you know deceased members you would like ORTA to list in this section? If so, please see our new page on our website (click here).

“It’s hard to forget someone who has given you so much to remember.”
—Unknown

WHAT’S NEW WITH YOU?

We want to put you and your chapter in the monthly newsletter! Contact Alissa at publications@orta.org, or download a submission from our website (click here) and send all submission materials to:

Ohio Retired Teachers | Suite 190
c/o: Publications
8050 North High Street
Columbus, Ohio 43235

We can’t wait to share your stories!
Please print, cut out, complete and send for your **yearly** payment.

Please print, cut out, complete and send for your **new ORTA** membership.