



From Your President, Jo Hendricks



Fall, the colorful period of change and the quiet transition between the warmth of summer and the stillness of winter, is my favorite season. The days shorten while the air cools and the afternoon sunlight softens. The leaves drift to cover the ground like a colorful quilt. WVARSE is also in a season of change as I was installed as your new president at the annual conference in August. It was a privilege to serve as president-elect these past two years and work with such a dedicated board of retirees. I was encouraged by the membership throughout the state as I participated in each of the HUBS meetings and attended several unit meetings during this time. I have much to learn from all of you! I look forward to the work ahead as we build on the past accomplishments of our organization and meet the challenges ahead.

I welcome any suggestions, comments or questions you may have. It is the mission of this organization to serve you. Your new board will soon be meeting to get down to business to do just that. I am preparing a list of ideas and goals to share with them and I would like to encourage you to work within your county units to:

Promote the organization by

- o Word of mouth—personal invitations
- o Send out letters and fliers to promote your group
- o Distribute membership forms and collect for your group
- o Post group information to social media and submit to newspapers (promote your members and group accomplishments)
- o Make connections to other organizations

Grow the membership (I will submit a plan to honor our top individual recruiters and county units that increase membership at the next annual conference). Now is the time to work on that goal.

Provide good fellowship and meeting programs that meet the needs of your group. Make connections and have fun! I think of each of our counties as a piece of the beautiful fall WV quilt. When we are joined together, we are able to provide so much more to our membership. I wish for each of you health and happiness in the season ahead and may your time with family, friends and acquaintances be blessed beyond measure.

2027 HUBS Meetings

1. June 2, 2027 – Spencer - Heritage Park Community Building, 110 Church Street, Spencer WV
2. June 3 - Mt. Clare - Quiet Dell United Methodist Church 96 Trinity Rd, Mount Clare, WV
3. June 9 - ZOOM
4. June 10 – Petersburg - First Baptist Church 112 Virginia Ave, Petersburg, WV

From The Executive Director, Bill Milam

The HUBS planning committee met October 21 and established the 2027 HUBS Meetings. The schedule is as follows:

1. June 2, 2027 – Spencer - Heritage Park Community Building, 110 Church Street, Spencer WV
2. June 3 - Mt. Clare - Quiet Dell United Methodist Church 96 Trinity Rd, Mount Clare, WV
3. June 9 - ZOOM (Any member can attend the ZOOM Meeting)
4. June 10 – Petersburg - First Baptist Church [112 Virginia Ave, Petersburg, WV](#) More details will be published in the Spring Newsletter. We apologize for the appearance of this Newsletter. We have for many years prepared the newsletter



using Microsoft Publisher. As of October 1st, Microsoft no longer supports Publisher, and we had to obtain another program. As always, there is a learning curve, and we are trying to prepare this Newsletter in a hurry. We expect to improve before the Spring Newsletter. Microsoft operates many functions including email. So, as a result my email was temporarily affected. I have it up and running now. During the 2026 Annual Council we elected some new officers. Jo Hendricks (Jackson County) was installed as president; Kevin Brown (Harrison County) was elected to serve as President-Elect; Dennis Stromberg (Harrison County) was elected to Regional Director of Region II, and Steve Bailey (Mercer County) was elected to complete the unexpired term as Regional Director of Region V. We look forward to their service as officers of WVARSE. Garrett Mowery no longer serves as our Rep. AMBA will assign a new person to replace him. when we are aware of who will be the replacement, I will notify presidents by email.

Legislative Article by John Taylor Legislative Chair



The election is coming up. We need to pay attention to who wins. Taylor County will have a TCARSE meeting the next day after the election. We invited both the Democrat and the Republican Delegate candidates to attend the meeting as our guest on the condition that they win. They have both agreed to attend on the condition they win. Whichever one wins, will have lunch with us, celebrate their victory, and be presented with a copy of our goals. You need to find novel ways to introduce our organization to whomever wins in your local Delegate and Senate races. Right after the election you need to congratulate the winners, have some discussion with them, and present them with our state level goals. Get their cell number if possible and stay in contact throughout the Legislative session. Our success depends on your efforts.

State Goals 2027

1. That WVARSE will promote legislation to continue and maintain the quality of PEIA coverage, without increases in premiums, copays or reduction in benefits.
2. That WVARSE will promote legislation to increase the pension of those who retired 20 or more years ago by two dollars per month per year of service.
3. That WVARSE will support legislation to provide a Cost-of-Living-Adjustment or COLA for state pensions starting with a COLA for those 75 and above with at least 20 years of service.
4. That WVARSE will support AARP efforts at the legislature.

~ In Memoriam ~

Cabell

Alpha Pritchard Knott**
Portia Warner**

Hancock

Barbara Van Beverley*
Barbara Dofka*
Carol Kohnfelder **
Carol Kohnfelder **

Harrison

Agnes June Coffindaffer**

Grant

Carolyn Shuman**
Carolyn Thorne Sites*
Estel Sites*

Kanawha

Rose G. Campbell*
Ruth K. Jones**

Mineral

Daniel W. Radko**

Summers

Charlene Cooper **
Phylis Parker *
Thomas Ward **
Harry Oswald Yates *

***Annual - 7**

****Life - 10**



Gilmer County

Gilmer County decorated a window in Glenville with information & items to represent WV retired teachers



Hampshire County

A group of Hampshire Association of Retired School Employees members met recently to prepare 150 blizzard bags for Hampshire County citizens who receive Meals on Wheels. Members have been doing this for more than 20 years. Younger members are joining veteran members in this project.



Jackson County

The Jackson County Commission recognized the Jackson County Association of Retired School Employees with a Proclamation. They extended their sincere thanks for all the organization does for the county retirees and the school system.

In Photo - Jo Hendricks (President), Mitch Morrison, Steve Westfall, Dick Waybright and Lori Mahan (VP).



Pleasants County

The Pleasants County Association recently presented the Boys and Girls Club of Pleasants County a \$500 check to help them continue the good work they do.

PCARSE President Charmel Ratcliff and Treasurer Randy Nutter made the presentation to Club representative Bella Tagliraini at the Association's "Welcome Back" picnic in August.



Putnam County

John Taylor spoke to the Putnam County Association at the September meeting. Members were treated to lunch and cake to celebrate WVARSE week.



Marion County

The Marion County Association of Retired School Employees met on Tuesday, Sept. 15th at Apple Annies at the Middletown Commons. Mary Ann Ferris was in attendance to install officers. She also gave an update on legislative goals. Members enjoyed lunch and celebrated WVARSE week with cupcakes.



Check out WVARSE.org.
Additions have been added lately.

Newsletters, new officers, calendar of events, including deadlines.

Form for county officers and form for honor points: Complete and submit. It will go to the executive director by email. The Red Book (which contains rules and regulations for WVARSE Board members, County presidents and Regional Committee Chairs) will no longer be distributed on paper. It is now in the website and has been updated. To view the Red Book go to WVARSE.org, click on "about", go down on the tab and find "Red Book". Tap on it and the Red Book will be on screen. If you find errors or missing information, please let Bill know. Some counties failed to send a complete list of officers.

2027 Membership Dues

Beginning July 1, 2025, annual WVARSE dues are \$25.00 and county dues are \$5.00, making unified dues \$30.00. Life membership is no longer available after June 30, 2025. Please complete the membership form below and give it, along with the appropriate check, to your membership chair.

WEST VIRGINIA ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED SCHOOL, EMPLOYEES ENROLLMENT FORM DUES FOR FISCAL YEAR July 1, 2026 - JUNE 30. 2027

Annual State Dues	\$25.00	New () Renewal () Associate ()
Plus County Dues	\$ 5.00	
Total \$	_____	

I am a WVARSE Life member and paying county dues only \$ 5.00 _____

PLEASE PRINT

Name _____ Date _____
Last First Middle
Address _____ Phone _____ Cell _____
City _____ State _____ ZIP _____
Email _____
Rered From _____ (County, College, University, ETC.)

Send form with payment (made out to to your local unit) to your County Membership Chair

Membership Clerk: Lea Ann Puckett
leaannpuckett@gmail.com
304 377-2439

2026-2027 dues are due July 1, 2026. Please complete the membership form and send it, along with the appropriate check to your Unit Membership Chair.

Darlene Milam Newsletter Editor 304 610-2935
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Boone County

Boone County Retired School Employees Off to a Great Start!

The Boone County Association of Retired School Employees (BCARSE) is off to a great start for the 2026–2027 year! They have held two meetings at Juanita's Mexican Restaurant in Madison, averaging 20–25 members in attendance. The September meeting featured the Boone County Schools Director of Technology, who shared helpful information and addressed technology questions and concerns from members. At the October meeting, local delegates were welcomed and provided legislative updates and discussed issues of interest to retired school employees. In November, members will continue giving back to the community by distributing books at Boone Memorial Hospital's Community Thanksgiving Dinner. Members look forward to another wonderful year of fellowship, informative programs, and community service. BCARSE continues to provide opportunities for retired school employees to stay connected, informed, and involved!



Carena Rouse giving devotion.



Kim and Kathy enjoying lunch at Juanita's Mexican Restaurant during the October meeting.

Braxton County

WVU Senior Solutions – Senior Life Solutions Program

Braxton County Association of Retired School Employees continues to offer relevant information to their retirees. The August program was a shining example. Senior Life Services by WVU Medicine guests, Stormy Kestner, Jami Laughlin and Raquel Peterson, delivered valuable information to members. Senior Life Solutions is an outpatient hospital program designed to support the mental health of older adults experiencing depression, anxiety, or other mental health challenges often associated with aging. This voluntary program can help with loss of a loved one, chronic health diagnosis, frequent feelings of sadness, guilt, worry or worthlessness, or feeling overwhelmed or stressed due to being a caregiver.

Senior Life Solutions can be contacted at (304)-364-1077 or wvumedicine.org/braxton.

Cabell County

Retirement may mark the end of a career in education, but for many retired school employees in Cabell County, West Virginia, it does not end their commitment to the community. That spirit of service often continues after retirement. Retired school employees remain active as volunteers, mentors, civic leaders, church members, caregivers, and advocates for public education. Fellowship is another important part of retirement. Gatherings and professional associations give former employees opportunities to maintain friendships, welcome newly retired colleagues, recognize members' accomplishments, and support one another during times of illness or loss. These connections reflect the close relationships formed through years of working toward a shared purpose. Cabell County's retired school employees deserve recognition not simply for the careers they completed, but for the influence they continue to have. Their knowledge, compassion, and commitment remain valuable community resources. Although they have stepped away from their official positions, their legacy lives on in former students, colleagues, families, and schools throughout the county. During the summer, they had a yearly planning meeting for upcoming meetings. At the September meeting, members celebrated the birthday of WVARSE. Donations were made to a local food bank. Local candidates for the House and Senate were invited to speak and share their vision of what the next legislature should look like. Members asked questions about being a pro public education candidate.



Kanawha County

On October 13th KCARSE was treated to a sweet presentation by Bridgette Bailey, Beekeeper. She brought an actual hive (no bees) to show the different sections of the hive, where the queen, drones and workers live and work. Bridgette has kept bees for four years, experienced the death of the hive twice, lost swarms of bees and recovered a swarm. She has two hives, but her mentor Larry Morris, who lives in Pinch, has 76 and his honey is sold at the Farmers Market and other locations. Members shared desserts made with honey and each member was given a jar of honey. Note: Bees have memories. They recognize faces and remember their beekeepers.



Taylor County

The Taylor County ARSE packed food for the backpack food program on Tuesday morning October 6th. Shown above are Donna Hause, Diana Swisher, Rosie Biggins(front), Janet Jacquez (rear), Curtis Hildebrandt, Cameron Rodriguez (social worker student), John Taylor, and Pam Gallaher.



Harrison County

The Harrison County Association of Retired School Employees (HCARSE) met October 13 at St. Ann Catholic Church in Shinnston. Members enjoyed a meal of pasta, meatballs, chicken, salad, and cake. To celebrate WVARSE Week, the group held food drives in September and October to benefit local food pantries. Members also marked the state organization's birthday with cake and a rendition of "Happy Birthday." Jimmy Jemondo, a funeral director at Burnside Funeral Home in Bridgeport, presented an informative program on funeral planning. President Phil Brown led the business meeting, during which helpful information was shared. Attendees enjoyed the food, fellowship, and program.



Lewis County

Lewis County celebrated WVARSE Week on September 22, 2026, by having a catered lunch and Birthday cake made by Chelle Cole. They met at the beautiful Museum of American Glass in Weston, where they were surrounded by beautiful pieces of glass. Thanks to Jane Horn for setting up the tables and decorating them with her fall collection. Members were given a copy of The History of WVARSE. Members were surprised to learn that the dues for the first year were only \$1.00. They started writing cards to cheer people up and let them which will be put Blizzard Bags that will be made up at the November meeting. Members completed them at the October meeting.



Debby Walker, Vice President, Barbara Zirkle, president, Shirley Hubbs, Secretary, Helen Derico, Treasurer

Tucker County

September 21-25 has been proclaimed Retired School Employees Week in Tucker County. Deborah Chapman, retired assistant superintendent, along with many other members of the Tucker County Association, and Tucker County Board of Education member Cathy Hebb (retired teacher), were on hand for the signing of the proclamation. Chapman spoke about all the good the members do in Tucker County and the surrounding communities with their volunteer efforts. "Many members put in more than 20 hours a week volunteering," Chapman said. "We do not stop!"



Nicholas County

September 21-25, 2026, Nicholas County Association of Retired School Employees (WVARSE) celebrated their continued volunteer service after retiring. For this year's celebration, NCARSE wanted to recognize all employees of the Nicholas County School system. During the week members visited the Board Office and schools leaving pens for each employee in appreciation for the countless hours of service each gives to the well-being of our diverse population. Traveling the roads brought back many great memories and knowledge that Nicholas County has some of the best employees and schools (small and large) this Nation affords! One may have encountered Nicholas retirees volunteering: in the schools reading with students, judging essay contests, science, social studies, and/or literacy fairs; the Summersville Chamber's Back-to-School Bash, Taste of Nicholas County, and/or Winter Basketball Classic; participating in the various fairs throughout the county; even making quilt blocks for the Veterans' Quilts of Valor to name a few.



NCARSE Secretary Barbara Mullens and Treasurer Suzanne Ward deliver pens to Craigsville area schools.

Tyler County

On September 9, TCARSE members attended a presentation by Leslie Schultz, LSW and Care Navigator at Jarvis Law Office, titled "Five Documents Every Adult Should Have." The informative program offered eye-opening insight into Medicaid's five-year look-back period. For September's service project, members donated supplies for fall crafts at the Sistersville Public Library. Members also celebrated WVARSE's birthday. At the October 14th meeting, Lisa Weese from Wanderlust Travel shared some upcoming travel opportunities through her agency. In addition, she gave members some travel tips and discussed changes in the TSA travel rules. The October Service Project was dedicated to collecting supplies for the Olive Branch Animal Rescue and Refuge.



Three delegates: Rene Hickman (I & P Chair), Charlene Galluzzo (President) and Patty Skeen (Secretary) attended the Delegate Assembly meeting on August 19th in Flatwoods.



Roane County

The RCARSE basket packing and delivery went very well. Several members donated items and helped pack, and all baskets were delivered that morning. Please see the photos from the activity. As for the bus trip to Oglebay, no additional people have signed up. 11 participants are still needed. The Jackson County chapter also contacted but no response. To celebrate WVARSE Week, members packed and distributed snack baskets to each school, the bus garage, and the central office. Members continue to collect printer cartridges for recycling, with the proceeds supporting the annual scholarship for a Roane County High School senior entering the education field. During the Black Walnut Festival, the one-room Newburne School was opened to visitors. The photos show members cleaning the schoolhouse in preparation for the festival.



Photos show members cleaning the schoolhouse in preparation for the festival and delivery of packets to Board Employees