



South Dakota Retired School Personnel

NEWSLETTER

Affiliated with National
Retired Teachers Association

"To Serve, Not To Be Served"

www.SDRSP.org

March 2025, Vol. 60, No. 1

Greetings from President Anderson: "Hats Off to You!"

Celebrating the Sioux Falls Unit's 60th Birthday May 6 & 7, 2025 • Holiday Inn, Sioux Falls, SD

The Sioux Falls Retired School Personnel Unit is so excited to be hosting the state convention this year. We are busy making plans to entertain you and making the time that you are there both memorable and fun. AND we have some surprises for you!

There are a lot of things to do in Sioux Falls, so maybe plan on staying an extra day or two to do some shopping and sightseeing. In the meantime, we hope to highlight various sites that showcase Sioux Falls during the convention.

Here are some things that you should know:

- Room reservation deadline at the Holiday Inn Downtown is April 7
- Convention registration deadline is April 30
- Units are NOT to bring a door prize this year.
- We have two special charitable projects for you to consider. (See articles in newsletter.)
- Socks for Souls
- Educators Rising
- We encourage you to bring a hat to wear during the convention.
- Book Exchange again this year.
- Fun surprises along the way, too!

Annual Board Meeting for SDRSP State Officers

- Monday, May 5 at 7:30 p.m.

Unit Reps/Leadership Meeting with SDRSP Board

- Wednesday, May 7 from 7:30-8:15 a.m.

Pre-Convention Tour:

We will have a tour of the Sioux Falls School District Career

Technical Education Academy on Tuesday, May 6 at 10:15-11:45. The courses offered at the CTE Academy provide students with relevant, experienced-based career-oriented learning that aligns with each individual student's future career. Some courses include: finance, health, culinary, aviation, construction, auto, welding, and more.



Post-Convention Tours:

Exploring Downtown Sioux Falls Area

We decided that because so many of our attendees like to head for home shortly after the convention luncheon, that the post-convention tours would be places to see right around the downtown area including the Falls, the Sculpture Walk, the Levitt Shell and the Arc of Dreams. We may have some hosts to guide you or you can take as much time as you have to see some or all of these sites.

Speakers Include:

- Jeff Gould – *The Wisdom Project*
- Phyllis Schrag-Mirror – *Mirror on the Wall...*
- Steve Hildebrand – *Promising Futures – Creating Equity for Kids in Poverty*
- AARP
- AMBA
- SDRS

Convention Speaker Bios and Charitable Projects

Convention Speaker Bios: Jeff Gould

Jeff Gould will be one of the speakers at the state convention. He is a broadcaster author, speaker, podcaster



and entertainer, who uses stories of inspiration and wisdom to help people live with passion and purpose. His program for this convention is titled "The Wisdom Project."

You may have heard Jeff on the radio during the holidays with his radio program "A Prairie Christmas." Jeff is an

outstanding speaker that will entertain and inspire you.

Phyllis Schrag

It is "Hats Off to You" so wear a hat as Phyllis Schrag will do as a speaker at the State Convention in Sioux Falls.

South Dakota Humanities Speaker headlines SD Retired School Personnel Banquet

Writer, entertainer, and humorist, Phyllis Schrag, is returning to her former community.



Phyllis Schrag will be the banquet speaker, courtesy of the South Dakota Humanities Council, for a talk entitled "Mirror, mirror on the wall; I am my mother after all". Schrag says, "You say or do something and you wonder; where did that come from, only to realize that you have become your mother".

Schrag also adds, "Using humorous stories, anecdotes, and a PowerPoint presentation, the audience will be reminded of common expressions used by our mothers, along with fun stories and quotes that help us remember the powerful gene pool from which we came."

Schrag is a retired South Dakota public school teacher, now living in Ames, Iowa. She continues to enjoy acting, singing, speaking, writing, quilting, and volunteering.

Convention Charitable Projects

Educators Rising

Educators Rising SD is part of a national organization dedicated to inspiring and equipping the next generation of teachers. Focused on high school students, the program encourages early exploration of the teaching profession, providing resources and mentorship opportunities. Through skill development programs, mentorship initiatives, and professional development activities, Educators Rising SD nurtures the talents of aspiring educators, helping them to build a solid foundation for their future careers. Overall, Educators Rising SD plays a pivotal role in cultivating passionate, skilled, and dedicated individuals who are poised to positively impact the future of education.

One of our projects this year that has been adopted by many RSP local units is Educators Rising. Some units have already given funds to their local Educators Rising organization. At the convention we will have a discussion as to whether to fund this group through our treasury each year. If your unit doesn't have a local Educators Rising organization in your area, please consider donating to this project as a unit or as individuals. Bring your donation to the convention and we will combine all the funds collected and presented it to them.

Socks for Souls

We have a wonderful project that you can help with called, "Socks for Souls". We are asking participants coming to the convention to provide new socks for the needy in the Sioux Falls area. Sizes needed are from youth to adult. For many people experiencing homelessness, a pair of new socks is so much more than just an item of clothing. First, the average person living on the streets walks a lot, which can add up to many pairs of worn-through socks



Officer Reports

Charitable Projects *continued*

and shoes. Secondly, keeping feet dry and warm on the street is a huge challenge. Keeping your feet warm and dry is difficult when you spend your days outside, especially in extreme heat, cold or rain. Lastly, clean, dry socks = healthy feet. Healthy feet are the ticket to mobility. Healthy feet are a part of human dignity. We appreciate your consideration of this project, which is, of course, optional. Thanks!



Officer Reports:

Membership – Anita Manning

Greetings,
Spring is right around the corner and that means it is time to update the information for the annual convention Membership Memorial. I would like to thank each of the units who have been so diligent

about getting the member death notices to me. Please note it will be up to each unit to email me the names of deceased members of 2024 so I may update my list and compile the names for remembrance at our annual convention Membership Memorial. If there were no deaths to report within your unit, please respond to my email address below stating no deaths.

Thank you in advance for your help in honoring and remembering our beloved deceased members.

Anita Manning
Email: manning310@sio.midco.net

Community/Health Services – Diane Odland

SPRING is just around the corner!! Hopefully everyone has SURVIVED the VERY COLD February!!

Here are some FUN Facts to bring a SMILE and a LAUGH to you and to keep you Smiling for your Daily HEALTH!!

Here's why Aging can be AWESOME!!

- Age doesn't determine SUCCESS – Colonel Sanders started Kentucky Fried Chicken at age 65!
- We lose a few bones as we age – born with 350 bones but as we age our bones fuse leaving us with 206 bones!
- Seniors hold the MOST voting power – those 60 and over cast more ballots than any other age group!
- Creativity doesn't diminish with age – Laura Ingalls Wilder didn't publish 1st book until age 65 and Millard Kaufman didn't publish 1st novel until age 90!
- Seniors live longer – due to advancements in healthcare and technology people are living longer. By 2040 senior population is expected to TRIPLE from 5.7 million to 14.1 million!
- Senior population is growing FASTER – older adults make up the fastest growing age group in the US
- You MOSTLY have control over aging – studies show only 30% of characteristics of aging are controlled by genetics with the remaining 70% is controlled by CHOSEN Lifestyle Factors!
- There's LESS Stress after 65-despite citing health and money concerns – 65 and experience LESS Stress!
- Learning can save your brain – in response to learning Seniors can grow NEW neurons over time which can help fight off dementia!
- Sleeping habits alter over time – sleep patterns change as we get tired earlier and wake up earlier!

A REMINDER of your Community Services Yearly Activity Hours:

Hours are due to me by April 10th, 2025 in order to compile our hours before the Convention. Remember to send a list of activities done both by your members as well as your Unit activities along with Total Hours! Since we had such a GREAT year last year with SO Many GOLD Awards – my CHALLENGE to each Unit this year is to increase your Volunteer Hours by 10% over last year in order to receive a Gold Award!! I know we can do this!!

Our Total LAST Year was 34,014 Hours!
See You All at Convention in Sioux Falls!!

Greetings from Gerri Larson:



**Executive Director –
Gerri Larson**

Another successful Lobby Day/AARP Volunteer Summit has been concluded. Thanks to all who attended and discussed concerns with State Legislators on various topics: among them breast cancer screenings,

medical debt reform, voting access, access to care and Medicaid expansion, and attended committee meetings. Jacque Sly was awarded the prestigious AARP 2025 Andrus Award for Community Service. She was also recognized on the floor during the afternoon House Session.

Hopefully, everyone has been keeping warm with the recent freezing temperatures in South Dakota and looking forward to warmer weather. Speaking of warmer weather, May is coming soon which means the South Dakota Retired School Personnel Conference is around the corner. It will be in Sioux Falls this year so hope everyone is starting to make plans to attend. President Cathy is busy making plans for an educational and entertaining get-together.

Please continue to plan activities and recruit new members. You will be receiving some information on this at the State Conference.

Gerri Larson
SDRSP Executive Director

Mark your calendars!

April 5 – nominations due for Outstanding Service and Florence Krieger awards.

Send to Cathy Anderson cander451@msn.com

April 5 – Scholarship applications due.

Send to Vicki Sterling vicki.sterling@dsu.edu

April 7 – Convention hotel reservation due. Call 605-339-2000 Holiday Inn SF

April 10 – Community service hours due.

Send to Diane Odland odlandjoel@yahoo.com

April 30 – Names for memorial service due.

Send to Anita Manning manning310@sio.midco.net

April 30 – Convention registration due.

Send to Gretchen Tweet

717 S. Holt Ave, SF SD 57103

May 6-7 – See you at the convention!

*All forms for the awards, scholarship and community service are on the website at sdrsp.org

From minutes of SDRTA 60 years ago (1965):

Unit organized: Sioux Falls Retired Teachers; Officer: E.B. Berquist, Rapid City Pres., Nan Nelson, SF VP, Dr. JH Jensen, Aberdeen Sec/treas. Harrietta Bach, SF State Director; NRTA – put out 3 newsletters underwritten by NRTA

Scholarship Opportunity

WANTED

Two Current South Dakota Teachers Applicants for a SDRSP Scholarship

1. They maybe found in your schools or within your families.
2. Report them if you hear rumors of an individual interested in working on an advanced degree or national certification in education. Approach carefully! They may be spotted reading a book or correcting papers.
3. Send them to the website SDRSP and look in the secret location for Scholarship Application. If they have taught for 5 or more years, they know how to use the computer.
4. Keep in mind this mystery needs to be solved by April 5, 2025.
5. The reward is \$1000.00 scholarship. Be alert! They may say thank you for turning them in.

Head Scholarship Sheriff
Dr. Vicki Sterling

From minutes of SDRTA 40 years ago (1985):
Units dissolved: Harding County; Officers: Pres Winifred Echelberger Pierre, VP Dave Evans Piere, Pres-elect Helen Greenfield RC, Sec John Poelstra Platte, Treas Vern Hutchison Aberdeen, Annual meeting was at the King's Inn in Pierre with 02 members attending. Workshops were held throughout the state in August. The theme was "Hospital Cost Containment Act; in other words "Cut the Medical Bill."

PRESIDENT Cathy Anderson
605-212-5565
cander451msn@gmail.com
Sioux Falls, SD 57104

PRESIDENT ELECT Vicki Sterling
605-256-6780
vicki.sterling@dsu.edu
Rapid City, SD 57702

PAST PRESIDENT Jacque Sly
605-381-9116
jacsly48@gmail.com
Rapid City, SD 57702

VICE-PRESIDENT Rhonda Preller
H: 605-438-4388 • C: 956-873-1375
rrprel@aol.com
Milbank, SD 57252

SECRETARY Carmal Tobin
605-445-2010
zgirl@carmtobin.com
Milbank, SD 57252

TREASURER Myron Fuerst
605-339-4312
myronfuerst@sio.midco.net
Sioux Falls, SD 57105

COMMUNITY/HEALTH SERVICES
Diane Odland
H: 605-694-2640 • C: 605-268-1123
odlandjoel@yahoo.com
Sisseton, SD 57262

NEWSLETTER – OPEN

MEMBERSHIP Anita Manning
605-351-3112
manning310@sio.midco.net
Sioux Falls, SD 57103

LEGISLATION Bob & Sharon Rose
605-342-8147
robertsharonrose@gmail.com
Rapid City, SD 57701

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Gerri Larson
H: (605) 721-4550 • C: (605) 431-2743
rlarmart@hotmail.com
Rapid City, SD 57702



Unit News

Unit News

Aberdeen – Gayle Bortnem

The wind blew us into our Aberdeen Area RSP November meeting. We worked on a word find game of SD towns and shared “the biggest changes we’ve seen in our lifetimes”. Many school memories came up. Our speaker was from our local Exchange Club. He shared all they do for our community. Betty Beyer brought the door prize!



Door prize from Betty Beyer for Aberdeen Area RSP

South Dakota winter has not been “user friendly” for us in 2025. We didn’t have a scheduled meeting in December. Then our January and February meetings were cancelled because of snow and/or cold. We are hoping for nicer weather in our March meeting. The plan is to tour our Aberdeen Public schools A-tech center. Pray for nice weather!!

We have 3 Grandparent Essays from 3 area schools which we have decided to reward with money at the local and then will be sending the best of the 3 onto the state. We have also been contacted by the FACS teacher at the high school to have a panel of retired teachers share with her class.

We continue to connect with the community and support public education.



Speaker from Exchange Club for Aberdeen Area RSP



Speaker from Exchange Club for Aberdeen Area RSP

From minutes of SDRTA 20 years ago (2005):
Officers: Pres Shirley Eismach, Pres-Elect Charollene Coates, VP Don Van Cleave, Sec Doug Swift, Treas Wyland Borth; Membership: SDRTA now has 19 active and 5 non-active units. Proposed bylaw changes were prepared by Dr. James Hansen. They will be sent by mail to each member. Officer change: Donna Fischer to complete Sec position for D. Swift. Community service reports from 11 units; SDRTA Tour report: December trip to Minneapolis, planning Winnipeg Folklorama tour

Unit News *continued*

Black Hills Retired School Personnel – Vicki Sterling

2025 brought us new experiences for programs and activities outside of our regular meetings. Aiveen Martin spiced up our meeting by teaching us how to exercise with laughter yoga. The pictures show us maintaining mobility and flexibility by acting like chickens and laughing all the way.



BHRSP members experiencing laughter yoga.



BHRSP members were able to attend Lobby Days in Pierre. Jacque Sly was honored with the AARP Andrus Award for Community Service. She is involved in many Rapid City organizations as well as providing leadership with many organizations across South Dakota. She was recognized in a joint gathering of the House and Senate for this award. As a past legislator, many on the floor know her dedication to South Dakota government. Congratulations Jacque!



Jacque Sly was recognized in the House of Representatives.

February, we participated in the nationwide project of Cupid Crew. We received 200 beautiful long-stemmed roses of different colors. Teams of BHRSP members went to three different senior centers to deliver roses. What a joy it was to watch people decide what color rose they would like.



BHRSP Cupid Crew

Unit News *continued*

Milbank Unit News – Rhonda Preller

The Milbank Area Retired Teachers/Personnel Association (MARTA) have enjoyed many meetings, activities and speakers over the last several months.

Many in our group met for community service last May at the Milbank Orphan Grain Train to package Mercy Meals. These meals are distributed to needy people both in the United States and different countries. Also, MARTA donated \$300 to help defer shipping costs.

Last July, MARTA met at the Millstone for socialization at breakfast and brought school items to donate to our local Food Pantry.

For our kick-off meeting in August, we had the opportunity to have two presentations. Bill and Cathy Zubke gave us information on Brain Health and an educator from Germany, Johanna Ward, spoke about what it's like to teach in Germany. Of course, somehow delicious fudge showed up on our tables!

In October, it was "'Hats Off to YOU". MARTA members wore a hat and told why that hat was chosen. A quiz about the history of hats was enjoyed, too.

In November, the local group of Educator's Rising from Milbank High School attended our meeting, informed us what they do as a group and recited a composition that was award winning at a national level of competition.

For our December meeting, MARTA had fun gifts and prizes at our Christmas Party.

Our meeting in February was canceled due to the COLD weather, but the Grandparent Essay Committee met to judge 5th grade essays.



MARTA packed Mercy Meals



MARTA - Hats Off to You program



Educator's Rising students presented program for MARTA



Unit News *continued*

Sioux Falls – by Sharon Dierks, Co 1st Vice-President

The Sioux Falls Area Retired School Personnel had a great year in 2024! We continue to meet the fourth Monday of each month at The Pizza Ranch on 41st Street, except for June and July.

We started January 2025 with a program by Jessie Schmidt, who is from the Better Business Bureau. She presented us with an update on Fraud Issues. In February, we will have a program called, “A Power Lunch for Middle School Girls” with Natalie Eisenberg. The girls will have lunch with women business leaders to let them see all the possibilities that are there for them.

Officer Brady Lieuwen will be our speaker in March giving us an update on the Sioux Falls Police Department. Also, SDRS will give us an update during our business meeting. We will have a presentation on, “What’s New at the Zoo” in April.

We are excited to host the SDRSP State Convention here in Sioux Falls on Tuesday, May 6th and Wednesday, May 7th. There will be lots of information in this newsletter about the Convention. On May 19th, we have an Installation of officers and a Remembrance Service. Also, at that meeting, we will have Ross Lothrop and Jerry Fogg telling us about the Canton Native Asylum Story. We will be taking a tour of the Canton Asylum soon after that.

We continue to do many service projects in the Sioux Falls area and collect items each month for various organizations. Again, check out all of the information for the State Convention, “Hats Off to You”. We look forward to seeing all of you this May 6-7!

Watertown – by Denise Ottenbacher

WARSP Winter Happenings

The Watertown Area Retired School Personnel (WARSP) have had a busy fall and winter. In November, retired history and German teacher Rich Thomas, educated and entertained members on the history of the Hutterites.

Our annual Christmas party, hosted by BZ, included a fun coloring activity, a gift exchange and of course,

yummy fudge. Although our chapter does not meet in January, a group of retired school personnel began making Valentine’s cards. By Valentine’s Day, 589 cards and 350 roses were delivered to 15 living centers in Watertown and Clark. This project, a grant through Wish of a Lifetime, involved 19 members and non-members.

Also, Pam Raeder and Sharon Brandsrud (see picture) helped tenants at the Hi-Rise make cards for Meals on Wheels. How fun to share joy with others! At our February meeting, members shared something that they loved. In addition to pictures of families, other items included a jar of homemade dill pickles made by another WARSP member, an SDSU Jackrabbit sweatshirt, a picture of a grandson’s 42 inch Northern, and jewelry.

Future meetings include a visit from an audiologist, a program by our local Educators Rising group, middle school musical entertainment and a visit to Castlewood where members will tour the museum, have lunch, and tour the Castlewood school renovations.



WARSP members participate in a coloring activity at the annual Christmas party.



WARSP members, Pam Raeder and Sharon Brandsrud, help ladies at the Hi-Rise make cards for Meals on Wheels.

AARP Summit and Lobby Day

This year the Volunteer Summit and Lobby Day were combined into one trip to Pierre on January 27 and 28. Several members of SDRSP joined the group. Jacque Sly and Anita Manning received awards for their Community Service and Leadership in South Dakota. Lobby Day provides opportunities to interact with your elected officials, plus enjoy a great lunch of barbecue ribs.



SDRSP members, Vicki Sterling and Gerri Larson share BHRSP experience with receiving a Community Grant.



Attendees sat in on legislative committee hearings.



Governor Rhoden joined the group for a picture at the Capitol.



Anita Manning and Jacque Sly celebrate their awards for Community Leadership and the Andrus award for Community Service. Jill Franken, Doug DeGroot, Anita, Jacque and Erik Gaikowski pictured.

SDRSP Convention Registration Form

SDRSP STATE CONVENTION REGISTRATION FORM

May 6-7, 2025 Downtown Holiday Inn 100 W. 8th St. Sioux Falls

"Hats Off to You"

WEAR YOUR HAT(S) AND COME JOIN US!!

Deadline for Rooms - April 7

Call and reserve your rooms at

Holiday Inn 605-339-2000

Ask for a room with SDRSP

\$129. + tax



or Scan QR code here

Deadline for registration-April 30

Mail this form and check payable to

SDRSP to: Gretchen Tweet

717 S. Holt Ave.

Sioux Falls, SD 57103

Questions?

email: gtsue66@gmail.com

NAME _____ Unit _____

ADDRESS _____ City, State, Zip _____

PHONE _____ Email _____

Name of spouse attending convention _____

A. Complete Convention Registration: \$60
(Includes all sessions, meals & snacks)

Number ___ x \$60 = _____

B. Registration by Individual Event:

Registration fee: \$20

(Includes all sessions)

Number ___ x \$20 = _____

C. Dinner @ \$25.00

Number ___ x \$25.00 = _____

D. Lunch @ \$20.00

Number ___ x \$20.00 = _____

Dinner Choice - Please select one of the following options:

_____ Chicken

_____ Pork

Pre - Convention Tour:

I/We will go to the Career & Technical Education Academy tour at 9:40 a.m.

Tuesday, May 6 _____ yes _____ no How many? _____ (Cost \$5.00)

Total Fees Included _____



South Dakota
Retired School
Personnel

Check Membership Addresses!

It is important for all unit officers to check with each member for their correct address.

Send all address changes, as well as names and dates of deaths, to
Anita Manning, 719 N Shepherd Ave, Sioux Falls SD 57103
Phone: 605-351-3112 • Email: manning310@sio.midco.net

Jacqueline Sly
22560 Potter Road
Rapid City, SD 57702

Address Service Requested



I want to join South Dakota Retired School Personnel.



Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Mail the above information and \$15 (annual state dues) to:
SDRSP Treasurer, Myron Fuerst
504 E Alder Lane
Sioux Falls, SD 57105