

SERREAM

Newsletter

Summer 2022

President's Message: Barb Hunter

Hello SERREAM Members!

I am your new SERREAM President. To be honest, I never thought of SERREAM when I retired. I agreed to join my local retired teachers' group as a good social outlet and most likely nothing more. As I began attending meetings I would hear things like REAM, SERREAM, TRA, pensions, changes, and need to be involved. I volunteered to be my local's representative for SERREAM. It seemed like a fun group. Then, we needed a representative on REAM. It involved attending meetings, I could do that. Here I am 5 years after retiring and President of SERREAM. I attend meetings and do a little more. We need people to be involved, just like so many other organizations. Our SERREAM board needs a Vice President and a Secretary. If you haven't been involved before, please consider doing so. If everyone did a little bit, we all will be so much better off. It involves an occasional meeting. Could you do that?

LCPR Committee Passed a Resolution to Raise TRA COLA to 1 ½% in 2023.

Starting in 2019 the Legislature set our TRA COLA at 1% for 5 years and then adding 1/10th each year for the next 5 years topping out at 1.5% by 2028.

With inflation heating up, Senator Rosen, Chair of the Legislative Commission on Pension and Retirement (LCPR) has proposed to permanently increase the TRA COLA from the current 1.0% to 1.5% immediately on 1/1/2023. The proposal includes funding to cover the additional liability associated with the higher benefits. Your REAM Advocates at the Legislature have voiced support for this proposal.

This proposal was passed out of the LCPR and sent to the Senate Finance Committee. However, the Minnesota Legislature adjourned for the year May 22 without dealing with many spending and tax issues. The Governor Walz is open to calling a Special Session if the House and Senate leadership can agree in advance to basic spending and tax bills. Hopefully, Senator Rosen's proposal will be included in the final negotiated tax bill. Fingers Crossed.

Curt Hutchings, Executive Director for REAM, stated "the 1½% COLA proposal might be considered in a Special Session otherwise it would be laid over for possible consideration next year, which is a budget planning year. Being this is not a budget year, they are under no obligation to do anything now."

Hopefully, if the 1½% proposal does not pass this year, next year a higher increase will be passed to help pensioners meet the challenges of higher inflation.

Minutes of the SEREAM Spring Conference and Annual Meeting
April 20, 2022
Elks Lodge
Faribault, Minnesota

- 9:00 AM.** A wonderful assortment of pastries, fruit, coffee, and juice were provided before the meeting. We were welcomed by Deb Scheil on behalf of the Faribault Area Retired Educators and the Kenyon-Wanamingo Retired Educators. She encouraged us to "Discover something new" about Faribault and the area, such as the invention of the Tilt-a-Whirl. Anita Hellie, president of REAM, said there is money available from REAM for projects for recruiting more members.
- 9:20 AM.** Lisa Humfield-Wilson, owner of Humfield Chiropractic and Nutrition, she talked about the different types of dementia and Alzheimer's and suggested ways to improve one's memory, such as exercise, doodling, board games, and learning a new skill. Watch your carbohydrates and eat more vegetables. Some herbs are also helpful.
- 10:20 AM.** Break
- 10:30 AM.** Humor therapy from Edna Thayer
- 10:45 AM.** Tim Moynihan and Lonnie Dubberstein, Legislation. (REAM) There is a need to increase the Cola because of inflation and the economy. However, there probably will not be any pension bills this session. Watch for information about The Center for the American Experiment, which is opposed to pensions. Find out which legislators support pensions and VOTE for them.
- 11:15 AM.** Chuck Hellie reminded us of REAM trips.
- 11:25 AM.** SEREAM Business Meeting, Kay Morcomb. The minutes of the 2919 meeting were approved as printed. The treasurer's report was handed out. REAM has 557 members. REAM and SEREAM Board members were recognized. It was moved, seconded, and approved to keep SEREAM dues at \$10, Kay Morcomb installed Barb Hunter as president and Sharon Baratto as continuing treasurer. We still need a president-elect, a secretary, and a legislative person. There was a standing ovation to thank Kay for serving three terms as president.
- Edna Thayer presented the Educator's Award to Barb Hunter, Austin. Necrology. A poetic tribute was read to honor teachers who have passed away since our last conference.
- 12:45 PM.** After a catered lunch, Breanna Wheeler, Executive Director of the River Bend Nature Center, talked about the importance of connecting with nature and the need for unstructured time. We compared our childhood activities with the activities of children today. Can you be a mentor for a child? What is your relationship to nature?
- 1:45 PM.** Door prizes were given out. There were 60 attendees. Dates to remember: Sept. 26-7 is the REAM conference at Treasure Island Casino, Red Wing. October 19 is the Fall Conference of SEREAM in Rochester.

Sylvia Swede, Secretary

The Faribault Area Retired Educators (FARE) wish to thank all the guests who attended the Spring SEREAM Conference on April 20, 2022. Many thanks also go to the speakers, local committee and additional FARE volunteers, the local organizations who hosted display tables, and to the units and individuals who donated door prizes to make the day a success!

We were happy to finally host the conference which had been postponed for two years in a row, due to the pandemic. Dr. Lisa Humfeld-Wilson, spoke about Mending the Mind, and gave advice about improving our memories. Breanna Wheeler, director of River Bend Nature Center presented The Promise of Intergenerational Nature Connection. She sent each of us home with a task to write a note to one of our nature mentors.

REAM Representatives, Tim Moynihan and Lonnie Duberstein shared reminders about the importance of active participation in the legislative process to protect pensions for those of us currently retired as well as those yet to retire. SEREAM President Kay Morcomb handed over the presidential gavel to Barb Hunter during the SEREAM portion of the day. FARE thanks the SEREAM and REAM leadership for their contributions to a successful conference.

The Faribault Area Retired Educators meet six times each school year. At each meeting a \$30 charity drawing is held. Each attending member has a chance to select a charity if their name is drawn. FARE added that to the SEREAM Conference before the door prize drawings. Anita Hellie's name was drawn and her donation to charity was sent to the American Red Cross.

The Fall SEREAM Conference is scheduled for October 19, 2022 in Rochester.

**Mary Osborne and Deb Scheil
Co-Presidents of FARE**

TRIBUTE TO BARB HUNTER
SERREAM EDUCATOR AWARD RECIPIENT – 2022

To introduce Barb Hunter as the SERREAM Award recipient is a pleasure!
Barb Hunter's dedication and service to education is a treasure.

After graduating from Austin High School, she earned her elementary education license from MSU.

Then taught grades 3, 4, and 5 for 8 years in Fairfax and Austin, too.

When her children were young, she ran a day care at home for awhile—
Went back to college and substitute taught for 5 years with a smile.

During this time she was active in the PTO, and busy at school functions as a volunteer.

She was Sunday School and Religious Education coordinator at her church for 3 years.

After earning a Learning disability and Emotional Disability Behavior License from MSU.

She was an LD and EBD teacher at Austin from 1999 to 2002.

The next ten years she was at Lyle, where she was on the School Leadership team.
Then 5 years at Southland Schools where she was the District Rep on the Special Ed. Leadership Team.

She belonged to the Teacher's union and served as vice president at Southland in 2016.

She actively promoted education and encouraged teachers. She retired in 2017.

Since retirement she represents Retired Educators in Austin to SERREAM
And then also became the SERREAM representative to REAM.

The past 4 years she's chaired the SERREAM Health and Legislative Conference in the fall.

Cancelling one due to Covid was probably more work than if it were held at all.

THANKS FOR ALL YOU DO! CONGRATULATIONS TO YOU!

Edna Thayer, Awards Chair

2022 Election – Get Involved!

Fellow educators are urged to be personally engaged in the 2022 political election like never before! There is so much at stake in the direction of policies that affect all of us in our State and Country in 2022 and going forward!

Here are suggestions on how you can be engaged:

- VOTE on November 8. Seriously consider voting absentee to avoid coronavirus concerns at your polling booth.
- Use your \$50 Minnesota Political Campaign Refund to support your local candidate financially.
- Consider allowing local candidates you support to place a lawn sign on your property.
- Consider volunteering for a local candidate at their campaign office, going door to door, or putting up lawn signs for them.
- Encourage relatives and friends to vote in the election and to take advantage of the State Political Contribution Refund Program.
- Go to the REAM website at MNREAM.Org for the latest challenges facing our defined pension plan.

Our great American democracy only works if concerned citizens are involved in the political process.

Donald Zwach, SEREAM and REAM Board Member
Zwach66@gmail.com
612-718-9121

MN Political Campaign Refund – Use It!

Get involved in the 2022 campaign by taking advantage of the Minnesota Political Campaign Refund to support your local State House & Senate candidates, your County Political party or State Political party. You can give up to \$50 per person, \$100 per couple and the State of Minnesota will refund your contribution back dollar for dollar. Go to <https://www.revenue.state.mn.us/political-contribution-refund> for more information.

The recipient political organization that receives your contribution, will send you the MN Revenue Form (easy to fill out – just 3 lines) and a voucher verifying your contribution. You then submit the forms to the Minnesota Revenue Department and receive your contribution back usually within 3 to 6 weeks.

SERREAM Fall Health and Legislative Conference is coming up on Wednesday October 19, 2022 in Rochester MN at the International Event Center. We have invited legislators to share information with us as well as an immigrant from Bosnia to share her story. We hope to have flu shots available during lunch again. The fee for the day will be \$25 which includes coffee and rolls in the morning as well as lunch. It looks to be a fun informative day! We hope you are able to join us for the day.

P.S. An interesting special guest speaker plans to start the conference addressing the topic of children's mental health.

Many thanks to Sylvia Swede for her service as secretary for several years through all my years as president.

past president, Kay Morcomb

Want Ads

Help Wanted

Secretary
Attend board meetings, only 4 a year
Attend 2 conferences
Take notes
Write minutes
Send minutes to newsletter editor

Help Wanted

Newsletter Editor
Attend 4 board meetings
Attend 2 conferences
Gather articles from board members one week after meetings
Organize pages
Send everything to the printer
The printer does an excellent job and sends a rough draft and final draft.
Proofread drafts and send approval.
That's all!
The printer does the mailing and the Membership chair contacts the printer with any address changes and information for the last page.

These jobs could be combined since the printer and membership chair do part of the editor's work.

A stipend is paid for each job.

GIFTS AND MEMORIALS

Honor SEREAM BOARD	From: Barb Beeman
Keith Burmeister	From: Kay Morcomb, Shirley & Curt Schroeder, Edna Thayer, Ben & Sharon Baratto
Shirley Jensen	From: ALARE
Betty Buffington	From: ALARE
Doris Callahan	From: ALARE

Probably you have already joined for the
September 1 - August 31, 2022 year.
There is always the opportunity to invite new members
to be on the mailing list for the Fall conference.

HAVE YOU PAID YOUR DUES FOR
SEPTEMBER 1, 2021 THRU AUGUST 31, 2022?
DUES FOR 2022 THRU 2023 WILL SOON BE DUE.

SEREAM Membership Form

Complete this form and mail with \$10.00 per person to:
Ben Baratto, 779 Bluffview Circle, Winona, MN 55987

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State _____ Zip _____

E-mail: _____

Phone: _____

Make checks payable to SEREAM.
Membership year: September 1, 2021–August 31, 2022

The newsletters can be found at SEREAM.org.

SOUTHEAST RETIRED
EDUCATORS ASSOC. OF MN
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