

# SERREAM

## *Newsletter*

Spring 2024

### **President's Message: Barb Hunter**

Is it spring? The warmer weather certainly has us thinking it could be spring. Spring means a new beginning and for SERREAM that means our April conference is happening soon! Please register for this day long event to be held in Austin this year on April 17 in the Ruby Rupner Building at the Hormel Nature Center. Bring along a friend to enjoy the day with. We will hold our business meeting and welcome new leadership in our organization. I believe all officer positions on our board are up for election this year. Please consider taking a turn at helping us out by volunteering to be an officer. I hope to see lots of you at our April conference!

### **Following is an article about the Faribault Area Retired Educators written by Deborah Scheil and Mary Osborne.**

The Faribault Area Retired Educators, FARE, has been around since May of 1977. There were 38 members in the original group who often planned community singing and member travelogues as part of each meeting. Today, FARE has 124 members and meets six times a year. While singing and travelogues are not part of each meeting, there is plenty of catching up about trips and activities during the social time from 9:15 to 10:00 that precedes each meeting. Volunteers provide refreshments, often fruit and a pastry, to go with that midmorning cup of coffee or tea. The first half of each meeting begins with a guest speaker selected by the Program Chairs. The speakers have been well-received and are always informative. Speakers have included local businesses such as Living Green Farms, Mill City Senior Living, Ignite Fitness, and the Woolen Mill. Local nonprofits have always accepted invitations to share about the services they provide such as Believet, trainers of service dogs for veterans, Americorps with their reading and math tutors, the Community Café, and the Community Action Center food shelf. Local students from the Robotics Team, DECA, and a young woman raising money for a trip to Tanzania have presented enthusiastically. Of course, our own members or spouses have presented on topics close to their hearts like Luke detailing the events surrounding St. Urho's Day or Jim sharing about the superiority of mules. The most recent speaker was Cea Grass representing Minnesota Senior Linkage Line. Not only did she share the wide variety of services available to older adults, she offered a tableful of fabulous SWAG.

The business meeting consists of committee reports: Wellness, Membership, and Legislative. These are followed by any additional business or announcements. FARE members, like educators in general, are very active in their local communities. We regularly donate to River Bend Nature Center and South Central College. During the pandemic, members brought forward ideas to support educators with treats for staff workrooms and a grant for professional development. A REAM grant helped establish a registered Little Free Library at the local food shelf which is supplied with books members bring to meetings. Each meeting ends at 11 o'clock or before; this is a strict requirement imposed by the co-presidents. Before adjourning, one of the usually 45 to 50 members in attendance will have their name drawn for the \$30 door prize. The twist is that FARE then donates the \$30 to the charity of the winner's choice. It is a good use of dues money that helps a cause in the community six times a year.

Continuing to have a large membership base is a priority for going forward. One challenge is that many educators no longer live in the district they teach in, so finding ways to reach out to these potential members will be important. We have sent handwritten notes congratulating new retirees – superintendents, support staff, and teachers – and inviting them to the first meeting of the year in September as our guests for brunch. An announcement is placed in the local paper and emails sent if those addresses are known. The most effective method still has been personally inviting someone just as many of us were invited when we retired. Also, retirees have so many options for places to spend their time, so we need to be inviting, welcoming, purposeful, good listeners, and offer something that makes committing a two-hour block of time on the third Monday of the month in Oct., Nov., March, April and May worthwhile (September is the Tuesday after Labor Day).

There will be additional challenges in the coming years. Newer retirees are enrolled in Education Minnesota Retired upon retirement as they have paid in throughout their career, so we will need to make a strong case for membership in multiple groups. The retirement plans of the next group of retirees, most of whom will not have been Rule of 90 participants, may have other pension fund concerns, and we will need to find a way to work together to continue a strong pension fund for everyone including future retirees. We want our members to enjoy their time together, to be informed, and to give back to the community.

## **Minutes of SEREAM Board Meeting on Thursday February 22, 2024**

SEREAM board meeting was called to order at 9:00 AM. Present were Ben and Sharon Baratto, Margie White, Edna Thayer, Kay Lastine, Barb Hunter, Lyle Olson and Kay Morcomb with Don Leathers arriving later. Secretary minutes of the November meeting were approved as printed. Treasurer's report shows a total balance of \$3303.71 in our checking accounts.

**President's Report:** Barb expressed concern over lack of new leadership coming forth and updated the board on what's happening with REAM. REAM has recently hired a communications person of whom one of the duties is to help get information out to members.

SEREAM membership stands at a total of 581 members at the present time. Ben will work on getting a letter sent to prospective members.

**Legislative report-** Mary Broderick has been appointed to replace Marty Zins on the TRA board. Mary has been previously been on the TRA board so brings a wealth of knowledge. We are encouraged to talk to our neighbors and write letters to legislators in support of the Rule of 90 which would enable teachers to retire before 68.

Edna informed us that Mark Sybilrud, a member of FARE, SEREAM, and REAM, will receive the 2024 SEREAM Educator Award at our April 17 conference.

Fall 2024 conference was discussed and is in planning stages. We hope to have it at the Rochester Event Center on October 16. Various speaker suggestions were given and those present were assigned people to contact.

Next SEREAM board meeting will be held on Wednesday May 15, 2024. This may be changed to Thursday May 16 depending on the Waseca representative. Motion to adjourn was made by Lyle and seconded by Sharon. Meeting adjourned at 10:15 AM.

## Health Article

by Don Leathers

A few years back on a family vacation in the Quad Cities, we stayed in a hotel with a swimming pool so that our grand kids could splash around on their water toys and lounge about in the hot tub. The next morning, Sunday, it was back to Austin, bright and early, but before we left, everyone ate their fill at the breakfast buffet in the restaurant. You know, the “all you can eat for free” variety so popular these days with families on the go and on a budget. I opted for scrambled eggs, a slice or two of bacon and countless, plump links of sizzling sausage. I might have even created a waffle of my own and drowned it in maple syrup. I don't remember exactly. What I do remember, though, is that as we approached the Iowa/Minnesota border and the town of Lyle, my stomach had had enough. The relief was immediate and the lesson learned. No more free country-style breakfasts for me. Next time, I transitioned to the softer, gentler side of granola, low-fat yogurt and a scoop of fruit. I had been liberated! No longer did I feel stuffed. Nor did I have that sinister suspicion that high doses of cholesterol were floating menacingly through my veins. I felt alive once again. Before long I was on a regular regimen of granola, yogurt and fresh fruit--for breakfast, lunch or even as a late-night snack. The benefits were many. Fiber- the Harvard School of Public Health maintains that a cup of granola contains 11 grams of fiber, half of the daily recommended dose.

Skin benefits- granola contains low amounts of sugar, but consists of a nutrient, manganese, which boosts energy, promotes digestive health and contains probiotic nutrients that stimulates the stomach and gives the skin a healthy look.

Calcium- an 8-ounce portion of low-fat yogurt contains 50% of the daily recommended amount of calcium. Further, yogurt is a probiotic which contains active bacteria that strengthen the immune system and aids in digestion. Look for yogurts that contain the thermophilus and bacteriophilus strains.

Protein- repairs and builds muscle. Both yogurt and granola are powerful sources of protein, especially the whole grains, almonds and raisins found in granola. The crunchy texture of granola paired with the creamy flavor of low-fat yogurt is a taste delight. Toss in a few strawberries or peach slices, and you're good to go. MayoClinic.com even recommends a few dollops of yogurt sprinkled with granola as an effective late-night snack that may promote better sleep.

Whatever your reasons, give granola and yogurt a try for a quick breakfast or pleasing snack. The benefits might surprise you, and the taste is delightful. Now, that's something to sleep on!

## **Legislative Article**

**by Don Leathers**

The Teachers Retirement Association State Board of Trustees, the organization that oversees the pensions for retired educators, has appointed Mary Broderick to represent over 70,000 retired educators in the state of Minnesota. Broderick replaces Marti Zinns, a longtime voice for public pensions and retired educators on the board. Broderick is a retired special education teacher for 41 years from the St. Cloud School District. Previously, she served on the TRA Board of Trustees as an active representative from 2007-2019. She retired from teaching in 2018. Broderick hopes to use her knowledge and experience to improve pensions for retired teachers across Minnesota. Broderick's start date was Jan. 2 and her term expires on June 30, 2025.

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## **Retired Educator Award**

**by Edna Thayer**

The SEREAM Board has selected Mark Sybilrud from FARE to be the recipient of the 2024 SEREAM Educator of the Year Award. Please plan to attend the spring convention in Austin on April 17 to offer congratulations. He is a very deserving recipient. His tribute poem will appear in the next newsletter.

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It's a great time to start thinking about whom you will nominate for the 2025 award. The nominations are accepted anytime. Please email to Edna Thayer, committee chair, at [ednathayer@gmail.com](mailto:ednathayer@gmail.com). Nominations may also be given to the other committee members who are Jeanette Bergler from Rochester and Nancy Reynolds from Winona.

## SEREAM SPRING CONFERENCE REGISTRATION

The SEREAM Spring Conference will be held **Wednesday, April 17, 2024, in Austin, Minnesota.**

### Venue

**Ruby Rupner Auditorium at the JC Hormel Nature Center(NC)  
1304 21st St NE, Austin MN 55912**

**Directions:** From the east on I-90 take exit 180B to 21st St NE, take a right on 21st St, NC 0.3 miles on right

From the west on I-90 take exit 180B to 21st St NE, take a left onto 21st St, NC 0.3 miles on right

**8:30 - 9:00 AM -** Registration check in  
Coffee and assorted treats available

**9:00 -** Welcome

**9:05 - 10:00 AM -** Speaker, Emily Toland, Attorney, “Estate Planning, Probate, and Long-Term Care”  
Discussion of new laws and choices surrounding Wills, Beneficiaries, Transfer of Death Deed, etc.  
  
Discussion on planning for incapacity during life; planning for estate administration at death; planning for long-term care/nursing home, etc

**10:00 - 10:15 AM -** Break

**10:15 - 11:15 AM -** TRA and PERA presentation

**11:15 - 12:00 PM -** REAM Legislature presentation

**12:00 - 1:00 PM -** Lunch Club Croissant Sandwich or Chicken Salad  
Croissant Sandwich, Chicken Wild Rice Soup and Assorted Cookies

**1:00 - 1:15 PM -** SEREAM Business Meeting

**1:15 - 2:00 PM -** Speakers, Panel Discussion “Life with a New Career” presented by Retired Educators from southern Minnesota

**2:00 - 2:45 PM -** Speaker, JC Hormel Nature Center- Information on new initiatives dealing with Emerald Ash Borer, invasive species like buckthorn, Senior Programs, carts and cation chairs, Sola Fide Observatory, etc.

**2:45 -** Prize Drawing

**Registration fee is \$30.00, which includes morning coffee and lunch, due by April 10, 2024. Each local is asked to donate a door prize.**

**Late Registration fee will be \$40.00 if received after April 10, 2024.**

**Make checks payable to AAREA  
(Austin Area Retired Educators Association)**

**Please return your registration form and payment to:** Cheryl Dunlap  
601 30th Ave NE, Austin, MN 55912

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Check all that apply:

Guest  Member: AARP  REAM  SEREAM  Local

\_\_\_\_\_

**Please pass this information or copy of the registration form on  
to any retirees you know who may be interested.**

***SEREAM Membership Form***

Complete and mail this form 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, 2023–August 31, 2024

**The newsletters can be found at [SEREAM.org](http://SEREAM.org).**

SOUTHEAST RETIRED  
EDUCATORS ASSOC. OF MN  
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