



NEARO Outreach



Number 150

National Education Association Retirees Organization

December 2014

IN THIS ISSUE

Survey Responders Speak Their Minds.....	2	Monique Bailey Stays Busy and Grateful	8
When Collective Bargaining Was New.....	3	Credit Union Developments	8
Rethinking Traditions for 2015	4	Lynn Coffin Reconsiders Holden Caulfield.....	9
Latest Retirement Plan Statistics	4	Lunching Down Memory Lane	10
Debate: Work After Retirement?.....	5	New Retirees.....	11
Exploring NEA Archive's New Home	6	Farewells	11

FROM THE PRESIDENT

by Joel Gewirtz



Okay, I admit it; approaching retirement involves a certain level of uncertainty and trepidation. What will I do with this sudden windfall of spare time? Will anything replace my obsessive dedication to these responsibilities that have defined my existence for so long? How will I ever find another activity as professionally and emotionally fulfilling as this one has been?

These concerns notwithstanding, I'm ready to retire from the NEARO presidency when my term expires on Dec. 31. I'll miss the obvious perks: riding in the limo, a dedicated staff, access to the launch codes. And, unlike retiring from NEA (which was easy), the pension here is nothing to write home about—which is just as well, because it wouldn't even cover the stamp.

Still, one must move on, or at least aside. My biggest regret leaving office is that Jim Butler will lose the Past President seat on the NEARO Board. We have often relied on his wisdom and experience and shall miss both. I am delighted to know that, barring a revolution or successful write-in campaign, Teresa Rankin will be our new president (she's a debater in this issue—see page 5). Teresa brings great energy and warmth, along with a level of wisdom surprising in one so young. Our organization will be in very good hands.

I shall also miss writing this quarterly column, despite a long history of my procrastination eliciting increasingly dire threats from our editorial crew. Have I mentioned recently what great work they do? (Perhaps they'll let me contribute the occasional guest column.)

Lest you be concerned as to how I plan to fill the hours I now devote each day to NEARO, fret not. My goal is to spend my newly free time on several things I'd hoped to do after my first retirement, but have not yet been able to accomplish: catch up on past seasons of *Gunsmoke*; grow a ponytail;



DON'T MISS THE DECEMBER MEETING!

Please join us for a festive pre-holiday NEARO membership meeting on **Wednesday, Dec. 10!** After the election of new officers (a much less nail-biting experience than the 2014 midterms) we'll enjoy a variety of culinary treats from NEA's new catering service; rumor has it that their food is excellent. There'll also be music, door prizes, a Most Impressive Holiday Attire contest, and—best of all—the company of your great NEARO colleagues.

We're hoping for a brief visit from the new NEA President, Lily Eskelsen Garcia, and possibly new vice-president Becky Pringle as well. If their busy schedules allow, they'll share with us their perspectives on the health and well-being of the organization and the challenges they see.

Mark your calendar: **11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.** in the News Conference Room on the lobby level of NEA headquarters. For those who never worked there—or who have repressed the address since retirement—it's 1201 Sixteenth St., NW, Washington, DC.

After the gathering you'll have a chance to check out the annual NEA Alternative Gift Fair, being held in the Atrium from noon to 2 p.m. This is a great place to score socially conscious holiday gifts for your friends and family while benefiting the larger community.

As always, the membership meeting will be preceded by a NEARO board of directors meeting at 9:30 a.m. in the News Conference Room.

experience intergalactic travel; wash my car; age gracefully.

A few last words about the elephant in our wallets: the NEA Retirement Plan. It has served us quite well to this point. (Bulletin: Our Jan. 1 COLA will be 1.5%.) The Plan helps pay our bills. It gives us something to talk about. It helps us lose weight by raising our stress level whenever NEA acts in a mysterious or threatening manner. We cannot control the Plan, but we're doing our best to keep an eye (often both) on those who do. We are ready to do all we can at the first hint of real danger to the Plan or financial misbehavior by NEA. I think we've got it covered.

I wish you all a happy holiday season, good weather, tasty food, true friends, and a phone that never runs out of juice. Thanks for joining NEARO. Thanks for

your support. And though I may occasionally make fun of our traditionally uncontested elections, a special thanks to the one voter whose ballot put me over the top each time I ran. (So maybe it was me both times . . . hey, at least I bothered to vote.)

Speaking of which, we all know democracy is far from perfect, and the larger the—how shall I put it—democratic mob, the more likely it will be heard. It goes with saying that NEARO can best protect our interests when it speaks for as many as possible. A new year is about to begin, which means we must all remember to re-member ourselves, ideally for more than one year. After all, no dues is bad dues, so please respond to the membership letter you'll receive from our new president after the holidays.

And finally: bye, quack, hop [sounds of departing lame duck].



SURVEY RESULTS ARE ENCOURAGING

by Donna Gold, NEARO Vice President (retired in 2008 from NEA Affiliate Learning and Effectiveness)

A huge thanks to 337 of you who took the time to return the NEARO Board's emailed survey this past summer about NEARO membership meetings. The number of responses and especially the high proportion of respondents (65%) from well outside the Washington, DC area showed a real commitment to staying connected to NEARO. More than three-quarters of the respondents had never attended a NEARO meeting.

Respondents ranked "helping ensure that the NEA retirement plan is healthy and keeping members informed of its status" as NEARO's highest priority (#1 for 93.3%). "Providing print and online information (newsletter, website, Facebook page, member directory)" was considered NEARO's second highest priority by 67% of those answering.

On frequency of meetings, 32% said NEARO should stick with its traditional four membership meetings per year. However, 45% felt meetings could be reduced to two or three per year. Some 23% said there should be just two meetings a year—the minimum required by NEARO's bylaws.

Reason mentioned most often for not attending NEARO meetings? The cost of parking in DC, followed by conflicts on Wednesdays, health issues, and desire to avoid the NEA building. Yet when asked about the best location for meetings, 60% opted for NEA headquarters.

Naturally, members outside the DC metro area cited distance and cost as reasons for non-attendance. But many of these folks expressed interest in being able to participate remotely in meetings, through web-based vehicles. A number also suggested periodic regional meetings in those areas where significant numbers of NEARO members live. Other respondents voiced support for restaurant luncheons, an annual NEARO picnic, an organizing seminar-style gathering on Sanibel Island, and DC area field trips and outings.

As a result of this survey, the NEARO Board has already decided to move to three membership meetings a year (see story on page 4). The Board is continuing to review the survey findings and explore ways to address your many thoughtful comments and suggestions.

Detailed survey findings, question by question, are posted on the NEARO website at <http://nearo.org/outreach/surveydetailsforwebsite.pdf>.



Looking Back on Better Days as a Wisconsin Agitator

WHEN PUBLIC EMPLOYEE BARGAINING WAS NEW

by John (Jack) A. DeMars (retired in 1999 as NEA director of international relations)

In 1961, after a year of graduate school at the University of North Dakota College of Medicine, I found myself teaching biology and general science at the small Wisconsin high school I had attended 10 years earlier in Superior, WI. I was happy enough teaching, coaching football, and working on the Great Northern Railroad as a locomotive fireman—and later as an engineer for the merged Burlington Northern.

Wearing two such disparate hats sounds a bit strange in 2014, but in those days teachers more often than not worked a second job. The art teacher worked in a gas station, the basketball coach in a clothing store, the shop teacher in construction, the history teacher in the post office. My starting salary was \$3,400 for teaching, plus \$450 for coaching, so with three children, supplementing my teacher salary was essential.

In 1959 Wisconsin had enacted the nation's first-ever law mandating collective bargaining for public employees, although few knew what to do with it. One day in my second year of teaching, someone ambushed me: "Say, Jack, would you consider taking on the role of American Federation of Teachers (AFT) building rep for the high school?" Simple enough job, I thought. How much trouble could it be?

Next came the suggestion that I join the newly created bargaining committee, which was intent on getting things right in a first-ever contract. The committee chair soon found a reason to resign (something about family), and I was selected to take over the job. I didn't decline; thus began a lifetime of union struggle.

After a few short years, Superior was on the map for having the first public employee strike in state history. In 1965 I ran for Wisconsin AFT vice president and got elected, probably due to the notoriety my local had garnered for its aggressive advocacy. In the 1960s I was called upon by AFT to organize Montana's first public employee strike, in Butte. Other such assignments sent me to work in Buffalo and Niagara Falls, as well as a short stint in Kansas City. Those out-of-state assignments were possible because of a clause we negotiated in our contract that provided leave for "union business" days; the school district paid my salary and the AFT paid all the other related costs.

At home in Superior, I was named executive secretary of my local union. In the course of five or so years we engaged in five strikes for what we considered major issues. We had to end discrimination against women by eliminating male-head-of-household allowances. We also improved fringe benefits, established fair discipline and dismissal policies and grievance procedures, set seniority rules, required the district to post job openings, and established pay scales for supervising extracurricular events. We were able to establish work rules mandating preparation time and limiting the number of hours and periods a teacher could be required to teach. Many of these issues were the cause of the strikes mentioned above. All this is taken for granted now, but in the '60s each gain took a serious struggle.

The school calendar was determined to be negotiable, and mandatory subjects of bargaining were established, first at the local level and then in state law. Prior to collective bargaining we had been governed only by school board policies; through bargaining we were able to change that and gradually establish many new employee rights over the years.

It did not come easily. On three occasions I was summoned to circuit court trial to determine if I was guilty of contempt of court for refusing orders to call striking teachers back to work. Small-town practical justice prevailed: the judge ordered us and the employer to get back to the table, and I was free to negotiate—with the threat of further strikes bringing pressure for the board to settle on the union's terms.

In subsequent years I would become (briefly) a school administrator, a university teacher, a Wisconsin Education Association Council (WEAC) staffer, executive director of a Wisconsin UniServ council, executive director of the West Virginia Education Association, and NEA Special Assistant and International Relations Director. But it's the early years in Superior that got me started in union work and stamped me forever as a firebrand.

I look back with pride on all that we accomplished in those first collectively bargained contracts, and I can't help but weep for what's happened to public employees in Wisconsin under the current regime.

RETHINKING SOME TRADITIONS FOR 2015

NEARO's recent survey found broad member support for adjusting the traditional schedule of four general membership meetings per year. That frequency was set decades ago, when most NEARO members lived in the Washington, DC, area and meetings and a printed newsletter were the only ways to stay in touch.

Now we have our website (nearo.org) and our Facebook group, as well as full membership email capability for blasting out a message when necessary to everyone for whom we have a working email address. News travels faster, and quarterly meetings—while always enjoyable—seem less necessary.

Future meetings are still planned for June and September, but we're not listing the dates here because we may try different times and days of the week, in an effort to boost attendance. Stay tuned to our Facebook page and the March *Outreach* for updates. We'll also be experimenting with different meeting formats. We're especially seeking those with expertise in web-based meeting connections to bring our far-flung members "into the room." If you can

help with that, contact NEARO Vice-President Donna Gold at djaygold@comcast.net.

Meanwhile, in lieu of our traditional March meeting, NEARO will be going on a field trip! On March 8, we will head to the F. Scott Fitzgerald Theater in the Rockville (MD) Civic Center for a Sunday matinee performance of "Haddon Hall," a rarely staged English light opera with music by Arthur Sullivan (yes, of Gilbert-and-Sullivan fame), libretto by Sydney Grundy.

Part serious, part comic, "Haddon Hall" is a love story set in about 1660. The artistic director is none other than NEARO member Joe Sorge, who directed the NEA staff chorus for umpteen years. The performance time is 2 p.m., and the "senior" ticket price is \$20.

Don't live in Rockville? Not an obstacle. We'll be offering some carpool options as well as a couple of pickups from the Rockville Metro station (Red Line). For those who'd like to make it a fuller outing, we will meet for lunch beforehand in a restaurant near the theater. Contact Donna (djaygold@comcast.net) if you wish to go to the performance and/or lunch.

WE'RE A LONG-LIVED GROUP!

For those who like statistics, NEA Human Resources benefits specialist Jim Groves offers this snapshot of everyone receiving benefits from our Retirement Plan as of Nov. 20, 2014:

- ◆ Number of people (retirees and beneficiaries) receiving monthly pension benefit: 1,324 (491 men, 833 women).
- ◆ 58 percent retired from NEA, 42 percent from affiliates or other employers in the Plan.
- ◆ Average age at retirement: 58
- ◆ Average current age: 71
- ◆ Pensioners now under the age of 50: 4 (includes 2 on disability and one beneficiary)
- ◆ Age 50 to 59: 67
- ◆ Age 60 to 69: 610
- ◆ Age 70 to 79: 448
- ◆ Age 80 to 89: 162
- ◆ Age 90 and over: 33 (includes one at age 100 and two at 102)
- ◆ Longest time receiving a pension: 40 years (since 1974)
- ◆ Average gross monthly pension payment: \$3,225
- ◆ Total gross pensions paid per month: \$4,270,748
- ◆ Total gross pensions paid per year: \$51,248,964

DEBATE: KEEP WORKING AFTER RETIREMENT?



Yes, of Course!

by Teresa Rankin (retired in 2014 from NEA Center for Organizing)

Whether I'm "keeping my hands in the work" or "not letting go," continuing union work after NEA retirement fits me. I'm slightly in awe of those former colleagues

who retired with a totally different business, talent, or educational goal on the near horizon. Unlike them, I've barely shifted gears at all. Paid or volunteer,

I have continued assisting state affiliate and other union campaigns, marching for good causes, joining phone banks, and even scheduling conference calls.

I took a sabbatical in 2000, about half way through my NEA career, and I loved it. I spent those six months studying union response to low performing schools (and starting an MA)—and returned to NEA pleased to have found there could be a full life outside of union work. But I never considered a countdown to retirement. In fact, I did the opposite.

I first told friends and colleagues I would retire at my earliest full eligibility date. But that date came and went. Eight more years passed before I finally retired. In the interim I attended at least two NEA retirement seminars. From time to time, people would ask me straight out when I was retiring. I always demurred.

Finally, with the help of an excellent job coach, I created a plan that included possible union work post-retirement. I gave just a few days more than the required month's notice of my retirement date.

What's the right balance between union work and other projects? I'll figure it out. Right now, eleven months into retirement, I like the example one friend offered: a third of the time for contributing to education causes, a third for helping local progressive candidates or causes, and a third for my own personal enjoyment.

Full disclosure: the writer of the other half of this debate is one of my NEA colleague heroes!

Ed. note: The next issue of Outreach will spotlight several NEARO members who continue to work paid jobs.



No Way!

by Jane Power (retired in 1993 from NEA Communications)

Back in 1975, when I'd been at NEA just a dozen years, I was benefiting from a short-lived sabbatical program offering a year's leave at half pay. I was

studying languages and visiting teachers organizations overseas, setting my own schedule. I liked that.

Come to find out, in just 18 more years I could retire at full pension—a defined benefit, cost-of-living-adjusted pension big enough to live on. (Given the erosion of good unionized jobs even in those days, that made me pretty lucky—now, in 2014, how many Americans still have that kind of security to defend?) I liked the prospect, and eventually counted down to the last hours of Thursday, August 26, 1993.

I loved the work I'd been doing; I just didn't like having to do it on an externally set schedule in order to eat. Since my husband, Jack, and I were heading out to settle on the Wet (sic!) Coast of Canada, I considered maybe freelancing or volunteering as a writer or editor for the publications of the Washington Education Association or the British Columbia Teachers Federation.

Then I thought again. Hold on there! Am I retiring or not? Anyway, is that really how I want to spend the next several decades? It wasn't.

So I enrolled in graduate school here in Vancouver. I got an MA, then a PhD, in Middle East history. Starting with a year of undergraduate history, it took me 15 years—fully half as long as my career at NEA. The academic world was baffling; demands were seemingly arbitrary; the workload for the first five years was punishing; schedules were unreasonable and inflexible.

But at least I didn't have to do it in order to eat. Hey, I'm retired, aren't I?



NEARO MEMBERS EXPLORE VAST NEA

The NEA Archive inside George Washington University's International Brotherhood of Teamsters Labor History Research Center was the setting for NEARO's fall membership meeting on Sept. 10. The archive, now housed in Gelman Library Special Collections on the GW campus in downtown DC, includes more than 150 years' worth of NEA documents and records—publications, reports, speeches, correspondence, badges, posters, photos, and other material. NEA's collection is still growing and will soon be the largest in Gelman's archives.



The NEA Foundation (formerly NFIE) was the lead contributor in bringing the archive to GW in 2009. The archive materials had been in off-site storage for years after outgrowing the limited storage space at NEA headquarters. GW sees the NEA collection as a tremendously rich resource for the study of labor history and education policy—an increasingly popular destination drawing students and scholars from across the nation.



The task of sorting, describing, and preserving the materials is handled by full-time archivist Vakil Smallen, who graciously invited NEARO to meet in the Labor History Research Center and hear about his ongoing work, funded

by an endowment from the NEA and its Foundation. He noted the archive's scope: 3,300 boxes of paper records, 300 boxes of photographs, 300 boxes of audio and film materials, and more than 1,000 books from the former NEA library.

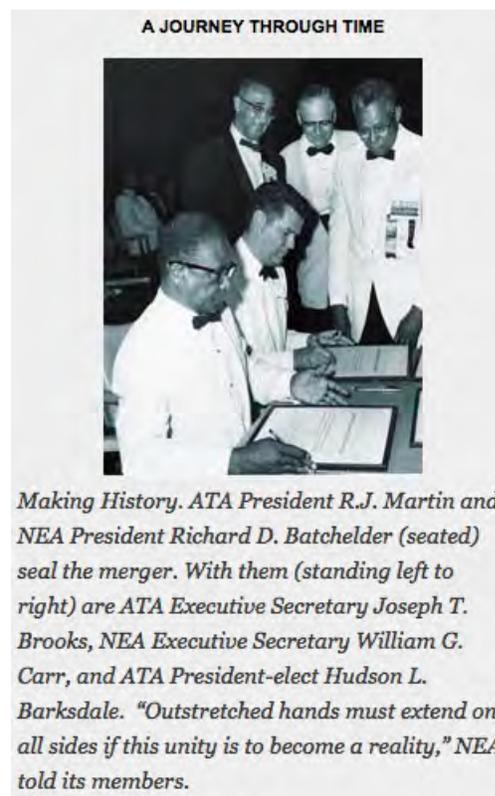
All items must be sorted according to type, arranged with related materials in one of 138 series, and re-housed in acid-free folders and storage boxes to preserve delicate artifacts, some of which date from before the Civil War.

Mr. Smallen got a knowing laugh from the crowd when he admitted that the complex NEA structure and the ever-changing names of certain departments have been "a problem" in trying to document the provenance of various materials. Fortunately he has a definitive collection of old NEA Handbooks to help sort out the acronyms.

Much of the history in the collection relates to NEA's social justice and educational equality work, including documents commemorating the 1966 merger with the American Teachers Association (ATA), a predominantly Black teachers' organization, during the height of the

civil rights movement. Among the other materials Mr. Smallen has cataloged are an original signed 1942 letter from President Franklin Roosevelt to the NEA executive secretary, and a photograph signed by President Harry Truman and inscribed "to the teachers and pupils of America."

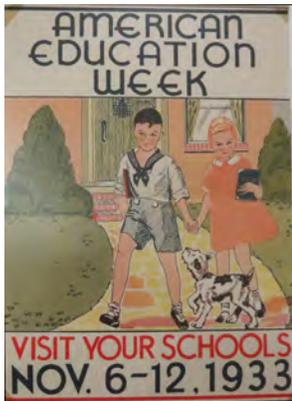
A good number of the reports, pamphlets, and memos chronicle issues for which the NEA



Making History. ATA President R.J. Martin and NEA President Richard D. Batchelder (seated) seal the merger. With them (standing left to right) are ATA Executive Secretary Joseph T. Brooks, NEA Executive Secretary William G. Carr, and ATA President-elect Hudson L. Barksdale. "Outstretched hands must extend on all sides if this unity is to become a reality," NEA told its members.



ARCHIVE THAT KEEPS LEGACY ALIVE



advocated, such as combating “juvenile delinquency” in the 1950s and lowering the voting age to 18 in the 1960s. Regular exhibits display notable items from the collection—both in person and on the web (<http://library.gwu.edu/scrc/collections/nea>). The current exhibit features a collection of iconic American Education

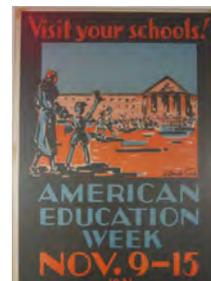
Week posters dating back to the 1930s, which line the hallway walls outside of Special Collections.

Many of the more recent items in the collection were preserved through the efforts of history-minded NEA staff—notably John Dunlop and Carolyn Salisbury—who recognized the need to preserve documents and photos and so made sure their file cabinets weren’t emptied into a dumpster when they retired. Mr. Smallen was delighted to meet these and other NEARO members whose names he recognized from old publications and memos, making us feel almost



like celebrities—but not so revered as to be allowed to bring food or drink past a certain “non-historic” area of the archive! Down the road, we were told, the archive would like to collect oral histories from retirees who remember the NEA-ATA merger and other historic events.

It seems that NEA’s history is in very good hands indeed.



NEARO members attending the September meeting in the NEA archive at George Washington University’s Gelman Library. Left to right, front row: Carolyn Salisbury, Edith Jefferson, Mary Faber, Marilyn Simmons, Norma Kacen, Nancy Greenberg. Back row: Ann Kurzius, Denise Alston, Donna Gold, Teresa Rankin, Gerry Gripper, Walt Rogowski, John Leeke, Ron Houston, Joel Gewirtz, Cathie Sheffield-Thompson, John Dunlop. Camera shy: Ray Daly, Dale Robinson.



BUSIER AND MORE GRATEFUL THAN EVER

by Monique Bailey, who retired in 2013 from NEA Great Public Schools. She holds a B.A. in liberal arts from Norwich University in Vermont and completed two years at the Corcoran School of Art in Washington, DC. She began her NEA career in 1997 in Human and Civil Rights, planning and designing materials for minority leadership, LGBT, and other diversity workshops, as well as working with the Joint Conference on Concerns of Minorities and Women. Later she worked in Teaching and Learning and Great Public Schools. Now working only for herself, Monique is enjoying life more and staying healthy. She has created numerous paintings, some of which she's sold to NEA staff. A woman of many talents, Monique has also published a newsletter on nutrition, written an e-book entitled The Key of Faith: Opening the Door to a Better Life, and conducted youth workshops on money management and interview techniques.

Since my retirement, my creative side has flourished. I'm renovating and bringing new life to a Baltimore house built in 1920 and updating another rental house in Oxon Hill, MD. I'm still organizing my own residence in District Heights, MD, purging and redecorating each room with the expert help of my daughter, Dominique. I continue to "feng shui" and landscape my home and my garden.

I'm also creating watercolors and have been commissioned to paint two more. I wrote, illustrated, and published a children's book, *Little Bear (Osito Meets Ms. Bee)*. I love writing and plan to collaborate with a few talented acquaintances who have written but not yet published books for children.

I thought traveling the world would be the main focus of my retirement. It isn't. Instead, I've enjoyed a road trip to the Grand Canyon, a week in Becket, MA, a few trips to New York, and two weeks with my sister in California. In December I'll spend a week alone with nature in Pennsylvania.

This way of life has brought me increased spirituality, better health, and wonderful friends with good hearts and sound minds. Thanks to God, good people, and NEA for the support and the means to be in this great place.



THE CREDIT UNION WANTS YOU

by Marilyn Hutton, an attorney who retired from NEA Collective Bargaining and Member Advocacy in 2012 and has chaired the EAFCU board of directors since 2013

The Education Associations Federal Credit Union (EAFCU), now in its 60th year, is a small credit union that built its reputation on friendly, face-to-face service to savers and borrowers.

However, its membership base has declined, due in part to the large number of NEA staff members who have retired in the past few years.

"One in three credit unions will vanish by 2015," predicted Robert McGarvey in *Credit Union Times* two years ago. Small credit unions can afford neither the technology nor the large amount of assets needed to operate—estimated at around \$100 million. They can no longer survive by themselves, so credit union mergers have become a necessary part of today's financial world.

Along with other small credit unions, EAFCU is listed on the Merger Partner Registry of the National Credit

Union Association (NCUA) and has been been scrutinizing potential partners. Plans for merging EAFCU with the neighboring National Geographic Society's credit union fell through recently, but we continue to be optimistic about EAFCU's joining forces with a larger credit union—one with growing membership and assets, and the ability to offer computerized services.

Merging with or becoming a branch of a larger credit union will allow EAFCU members to bank online, make remote deposits, and get debit or pre-paid debit cards. But even without a merger, EAFCU offers direct deposit of Social Security and pension checks into your savings account, as well as vacation loans at attractive rates.

If you're not a credit union member or if you closed your account upon your retirement, please consider joining or rejoining. Just contact EAFCU manager Chidi Onyewu at 202-822-7800 or EAFCU@nea.org.

Mainly Musings



CAN YOU GO HOME AGAIN? REVISITING HOLDEN CAULFIELD

by Lynn Coffin, who retired in 2009 as director of NEA Marketing and Information Services. She and her husband live in Portland, Maine, where Lynn enjoys raising orchids—and sharing her reflections as NEARO's official columnist.

For all of us who are addicted to print, books are a powerful drug, almost like Ecstasy. They can cause such behaviors as perilous stacking, endless sorting, and (okay, let's admit it) excessive hoarding.

We may have good intentions to divest ourselves of books we've read, because the chances of our ever rereading them are negligible, but still we procrastinate. We tell ourselves they really don't take up that much space and they don't cost that much to move. Alas, there seems to be no AA for book addicts.

So, when I read that J.D. Salinger's

The Catcher in the Rye has celebrated its 63rd birthday and is actually older than I am, I decided I needed to make my book hoarding count for something. I unshelved the paperback copy I had been dragging from one home to another for years (14th edition, 1966, priced 75 cents) and settled in for a nostalgic read.

I have to admit that *Catcher* is one of my favorite books of all time. I first read it in 8th grade (blissfully unaware of the controversy that surrounded its inclusion in school libraries and curricula) and have reread it several times since. As an impressionable adolescent, Holden Caulfield seemed to epitomize my own angst and anxiety, even though his circumstances hardly resembled my own. Later, as a young adult and a rookie junior high school teacher, I could understand my students' behaviors in light of Holden's erratic attempts to make sense of a senseless world.

As inspired as I was to take a new look at Salinger's classic, I was also apprehensive. In 2004 one of my favorite book reviewers, Jonathan Yardley of the *Washington Post*, had included *Catcher* in his "Second Reading" series, in which he periodically reviewed older titles and books out of print. After rereading *Catcher*, Yardley excoriated it as a "painful experience" due to Salinger's "execrable prose and Caulfield's jejune narcissism." I was horrified that a person whose book sense I respected could be so disparaging toward a book I loved. (Only a book

addict would remember a 10-year-old review.)

I looked up the Yardley review online, steeled myself to reread it, and found it just as withering as I had remembered.

Then I plunged ahead with rereading *Catcher* myself. How did the novel hold up, these many years since

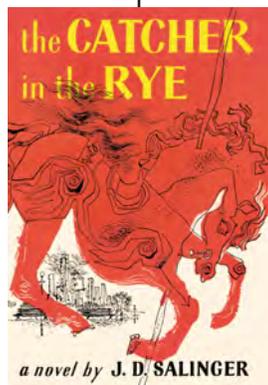
my last reading? Holden, bless his heart, is still the troubled youth he was when I met him almost 50 years ago. He still finds much to disdain and little to enjoy in the world around him. His relationships with his peers and with adults are still awkward and strained. Not surprisingly for a fictional character, Holden has been frozen in amber.

Or has he? I'm not a big fan of literary critics who argue that texts have no meaning except that which the reader

generates (essentially denying the author much credit beyond putting words on a page). But I do think that reading *Catcher* from the viewpoint of a 60-year-old as opposed to a 14- or 21-year old puts Holden's cynicism, disaffection, and erratic behavior on a different emotional footing.

I started thinking about the last chapter, where (spoiler alert—though I doubt anyone reading this column hasn't read *Catcher*) Holden is institutionalized. His erratic behavior and serial expulsions from prep schools have finally landed him in a psychiatric facility. I don't really remember, but I suspect that when I read the book the first time, I felt that Holden's incarceration was just one more example of how adults try to suppress teenage rebellion rather than let it lead to actual creativity.

Reading this chapter now, a half century later, my focus was more on how Holden's obvious depression and the defensive behaviors he used to cope with his alienation and unhappiness led him to be under psychiatric care. From this vantage point, Holden isn't rebellious; he's suicidal and lacks the appropriate skills to cope with his feelings and thoughts.



Yardley’s “Second Look” review claimed that Holden’s dead brother Allie and his younger sister Phoebe were simply manipulative tropes that Salinger added to wring emotion out of the reader. I contend this is a serious misreading of the novel. Holden is a young man completely traumatized by the death of his beloved younger brother, let down and disappointed by various adults (including his parents), and bereft at

the thought of something happening to his sister. He acts out, not out of rebellion but as a cry for someone to help him deal with his bewilderment at the world around him.

So, do I think that the book holds up? I do—just in a different way. Will I read it again? No doubt—it is back in its space on my bookshelf. What do I think about rereading? I highly recommend it.

THOSE WERE THE DAYS...

Some of us have been reminiscing about the various DC restaurants and watering holes we used to patronize, in the neighborhood of 1201 Sixteenth St., NW. An email from Ken Melley took us on an especially vivid trip down memory lane:

“I remember the front lounge of the Jeff, as we called the Jefferson Hotel. I don’t believe the lounge had a name. Sort of dark and dingy, unlike today’s upscale Jefferson. The waitstaff included a woman named Nancy. She was middle-aged, tall, with a British or Scottish accent. She was murdered in a robbery attempt one night when she got off work. It happened on the NEA side of the street, closer to Scott Circle.

“Then there was the Madison Hotel. When I first came to town—1968—the bar off the front lobby was ‘Men Only.’ Men were required to wear coats and neckties to be admitted. The surly waiter who was the enforcer of these rules was named Bill. As you might expect, several NEA staff, all women, picketed in front of the hotel protesting the male-only restriction. The *Washington Post* building was across the street, so of course the protest made the news, and shortly thereafter Marshall Coyne, the owner of the Madison, was forced to open the bar to all comers, men and women.”

Other favorite spots from our younger days are listed below. Many of these are long since defunct, but some live on. How many do you remember?

Annie’s Paramount Steakhouse
 Ascot
 Astor
 Bacchus
 Bassin’s
 Blackie’s House
 of Beef
 Bonat’s Cafe
 Cantina d’Italia
 Capital Hilton—
 Trader Vic’s,
 Twigs
 Casino Royal
 Charley’s Crab
 Chez Camille
 Chez Francois
 Childe Harold
 Court of the Mandarins
 Dolley Madison
 Dominique’s
 Duke Zeibert’s
 El Bodegon
 The Fatted Calf

Goldrush
 The Golden Ox
 Gramercy Inn—Devil’s
 Fork
 The Grotto
 Gusti’s
 Iron Gate Inn
 La Fonda
 La Salle
 du Bois
 Le Souperb
 Loeb’s Perfect
 New York Deli
 Luigi’s
 Madison coffee shop
 Maison Blanche
 Mama Ayesha’s
 Mel Krupin’s
 Mr. Days
 Mr. Eagan’s
 M Street Deli
 Old Ebbitt Grill
 The Palm

Post Pub
 Rothschild Cafeteria
 Rumors
 Sholl’s Colonial Cafeteria
 Sign of the Whale
 Sushi-Ko
 Tabard Inn
 Trio Restaurant
 Vie de France
 Vista Hotel—lobby bar



WELCOME, NEW RETIREES!

James Allmendinger NEA-New Hampshire 12/15/83 - 9/1/14	William Howell MEA-MFT (Montana) 7/30/79 - 9/1/14	Janet Paddleford NEA-New Hampshire 9/1/81 - 9/1/14
Stanley Binder NEA Membership Services 2/13/95 - 8/1/14	Linda Lynch Kentucky Education Association 2/8/06 - 8/1/14	William Raabe NEA Ctr for Great Public Schools 3/19/01 - 8/1/14
Pamela Burtnett Florida Education Association 5/29/07 - 9/1/14	Cheryl Lunde Maine Education Association 8/28/88 - 9/1/14	Steven Sacks NEA-New Hampshire 5/18/92 - 9/1/14
Michael Coleman Arkansas Education Association 1/3/89 - 9/1/14	Claire Martin APSCUF 7/7/92 - 9/1/14	Dennis Van Roekel National Education Association 9/1/97 - 9/1/14
H. Ross Ferrell, Jr Maine Education Association 3/1/99 - 8/1/14	Carol Nelson NEA Pacific Region 8/18/03 - 8/1/14	Michael Walker-Jones Arkansas Education Association 2/2/90 - 8/1/14

DIRECTORY CHANGES

Aurora Arcilla 18008 Aguamiel Rd San Diego, CA 92128	Chuck Kuzminski 12792 SW Peachvale St. Tigard, OR 97224	Jacqueline Smith 4210 South Winds Place, # 424 White Plains, MD 20695 jackspot2@comcast.net
Jo Ann Burge-Herren 115 W G Ave Little Rock, AR 72116-8729	Juanita B. Lambert 12212 Malin Ln Bowie, MD 20715-1805	Nancy Starrett 13829 S Darnell St #301 Olathe, KS 66062-5379
Robin Butterfield 28586 Greenway Drive Wilsonville, OR 97070 971-506-5338 robinbutterfield@gmail.com	Lucille Mixon 502 Station Creek Rd Collins, MS 39428-4408	Barbara Valentine 10450 Lottsford Rd, #245 Bowie, MD 20721-2743
Georgia Criswell 501-993-1688	Marilyn M. Simmons 6400 9th Ave Chillum, MD 20783 301-559-0272	

FAREWELLS

Wanda C. Adams, 80, who retired from NEA in 2002, died Sept. 24 in Washington, DC. A Connecticut native, she moved to Washington in 1957 and initially worked in the registrar's office at Georgetown University. After retiring from NEA she volunteered at the Smithsonian, most recently at the National Air and Space Museum. Gifted with an operatic quality voice, Wanda sang in a number of local stage productions.

Lyndle Barnes, Sr., 92, died April 26 in Princeton, KY. He worked as a teacher and principal in the Kentucky public schools and as director of special services for the Kentucky Education Association, from which he retired in 1982.

Evalena Berry, 93, longtime associate executive secretary of the Arkansas Education Association, died May 15 in Little Rock. Her first teaching job was in a one-room school in Lick Skillet, AR. She retired from AEA in 1981.

Continued on page 12

FAREWELLS, CONTINUED

Sandra L Kline, 68, who retired on disability in 2002 from the Association of Pennsylvania State College and University Faculties (APSCUF), died Sept. 22 in Bloomsburg, PA.

Margaret (Marge) R. McAleer, 84, died on Nov. 12 in Odenton, MD. Marge began work at NEA in 1968 and retired from the Accounts Division in 1991. Those who knew her remember her hearty laugh and stern dedication to detail and accuracy on travel vouchers. Memorial contributions may be made to Philanthropy Department, Hospice of the Chesapeake, 90 Ritchie Highway, Pasadena, MD 21122.

Edward Paul ("Doc") Parker, 76, died Sept. 3 in Rustburg, WV. Doc worked in NEA headquarters' physical plant, where he displayed legendary patience in dealing with the dysfunctional heating/cooling system pre-renovation. Condolences may be sent online at www.tharpfuneralhome.com.

Paul E. Putnam, 81, who retired from NEA in 1994, died on Aug. 22 in Brunswick, ME. He began his teaching career in Massachusetts in 1956. In 1964 he left teaching and joined the Massachusetts Teachers Association as a field representative. He became an NEA teacher rights specialist in 1968.

Thomas W. Shaffer, 78, died Oct. 22 in Phoenix, AZ. He retired in 1996 from the Arizona Education Association, where he served in various professional staff positions in government relations and legal programs.

Marjorie L. Schleifer, 92, died Oct. 18 in Royal Palm Beach, FL. She began working on the old NEA journal in 1955, moving through the ranks from stenographer to administrative assistant. A native of Jamaica, Marjorie always said she knew upon arrival in the U.S. that she wanted to work for education, and NEA had proven to be the answer to her wish. She retired from NEA Communications in 1985.

Georgia Ann (G.A.) Treadaway, 69, who retired in 2005 from NEA Research, died Sept. 7 in Brunswick, GA, after a short illness. In between her two stints in Research, G.A. worked in Collective Bargaining and Compensation. All who knew her are welcome to attend the interment of her cremains at Arlington National Cemetery on Dec. 16 at 1 p.m. Attendees must gather in the Administrative Building (enter through Memorial Drive) by 12:15 before the procession to the grave site.

Ima Lee Wells, 77, died on August 10 in Loveland, CO. She retired in 2006 from NEA-New Mexico, where she had served as president from 1987 through 1992. Ima Lee was elected to the state legislature in 1993 and served one term. In the late 1990s she moved to Rockford, IL, and worked for NEA-Illinois for five years. Donations may be made to Lewy Body Dementia Association, 912 Killian Hill Road, SW, Lilburn, GA 30047.

George Yamamoto, 82, died July 20 in Aiea, HI. An Army veteran who served in the Korean War, he retired in 2001 from the Hawaii State Teachers Association, where he had been executive director. Beginning as a high school teacher, counselor, and principal, George later served as president of the Hawaii Government Employees Association and executive secretary for its retiree unit.

NEARO

4904 Ertter Drive
Rockville, MD 20852

Officers and Board of Directors

Joel Gewirtz, President, nearofiddles@gmail.com

Donna Gold, Vice-President

Steven Martinez, Treasurer

Mary Faber, Recording Secretary

Vacancy, Membership Secretary

Barry Abel, Ron Houston, Norma Kacen,

Pat Orrange, Dale Robinson, John Thurston

Ex Officio

Jim Butler, Immediate Past President

Outreach Editorial and Production

Ann Kurzius, Barbara Lawless Donley, Mary Faber,

Cindi Kaiser deCapiteau

Webmaster

Steve Siegel