

UABRA NEWSLETTER

MAY MEMBERSHIP MEETING ISSUE

APRIL 2012

News in General

UABRA members were treated to a lively question and answer session at the spring seminar. Representatives from Social Security, PEEHIP, TIAA/CREF, and the Retirement Systems of Alabama were on hand to give assurances and information. There will be no further changes in PEEHIP for this year and that news was gratefully received. Yes, Social Security will be undergoing some form of change that has yet to be defined. Also our retirement program will be different for those yet to retire but our program (those already retired) is not slated for change. As the state compounds cuts upon cuts, one can only be assured that MEDICAID will see short falls when it comes to state matching.

The Governor is hell-bent to establish charter schools, which will mean "private schools with public funding." I fear these schools will get priority funding from the state with money taken from existing schools. Political cronies will be allowed to "own" these schools and make money from them. The owners do not have to follow any of the "rules" established over time by the Dept. of Education, but rather, can make-up their own rules. I believe the net result will be less money for the rest of K-12 schools and for higher education.

In the news is a bill calling for the separation of UAH and UAB from the UA System. The Presidents from both institutions have stated they are not in favor of the change. The Chancellor of the system has said the same thing. Where this is going is as unpredictable as any of the other political issues created by our seated legislators.

AERA Annual Meeting

Sixteen of the registered 18 voting delegates of the UABRA were present for the meeting. The meeting was held at the Cahaba Grand Convention Center in Birmingham on April 3. In the business session,

there was only one issue before the delegation that was of interest to higher education. The presidents of the retiree associations of the University of Alabama, Auburn University, the University of Alabama in Huntsville, and the University of Alabama at Birmingham were the authors of the constitutional amendment that would have created a position solely for higher education on the board of directors. While higher education has expanded its membership to over 2,000 members of AERA, K-12 has nearly 21,000 members. University based members, some of whom have been members for 10 years or more are not known by K-12 folks. This situation leaves us unknown and without sufficient numbers to get anyone elected to the board of directors of AERA. The Constitutional Amendment was designed to remedy this situation. We fought the good fight but the Amendment was turned down outright by the assembly.

Higher education representatives from all institutions were very upset and disappointed over this development. There were numerous K-12 representatives, which supported and voted for the measure but were also disappointed. Your UABRA Board will discuss this at our next meeting. Some of the other institutions of higher education are calling for an H. E. summit to coordinate the response. You will be kept posted on what happens.

May Membership Meeting

The May Membership Meeting has been set for May 8, 2012 starting at 1:30 p.m. at the Auditorium of the Homewood Public Library. Our featured guest and speaker will be UAB President, Dr. Carol Garrison. Dr. Garrison will give us an update of what is happening and what is coming-up for UAB. We will also have an update on our project to honor Past-president of UABRA, Dr. Cecil Nepomuceno. Yvonne Akins, Executive Director of Rehabilitative Medicine, will give us this update. As of press time, I am still awaiting word from another speaker that may be joining us. It may have to be a surprise.

Membership

UAB has some 4,000 retirees. UABRA has more than 1,000 members and there are some 825 UAB members of AERA. If we are serious about having a voice in our retirement future, we have a lot of recruiting to accomplish. In the next two years, I would like to see UABRA's membership advance to 1,500 and for UAB to have 1,250 members of AERA. Membership numbers in our ranks means more influence and a better chance to have an impact on our future. Without more membership for us, we have to depend on the efforts of others and hope we are included in anything they are able to accomplish. You decide which is best. If you decide as I have, then make use of the membership application accompanying this mailing and give it to a friend, neighbor or colleague who has retired from UAB or the UAB Hospital. Bring them to the May Membership Meeting and help them get involved.

From Membership Secretary Erna Wesley

After April 15, May 15 is another important date for us to remember. This is the day for our current 1,169 members to renew their 2012-13 APPLICATION to UABRA! The application is included in this newsletter. We welcome recent retirees and encourage current members to complete the application and return to: UABRA, P.O. Box 55682, Birmingham, AL 35255 or just bring the form and a check to the May Meeting on May 8, 2012, 1:30-3:30 Homewood Public Library Auditorium. Thanks, we look forward to meeting all of our new members.
Erma

(Editor's Note: Thanks are due to Erma for her exceptional job of keeping track of our members and for extending invitations to membership to all new retirees as quickly as they are identified)

Treasurer's Report Rebecca Bradley

Rebecca reports a beginning balance on January 1, 2011 of \$20,813.46 with deposits to-date of \$7,435.00 and expenses of \$8,212.09. The ending balance for December 30, 2012 was \$20,036.37 with deposits to-date of \$105.00 and expenses of

\$1,154.44 for a balance of \$18,986.93 as of March 31, 2012.

(Editor's Note: Thanks are due to the entire board for their careful management of the treasury and special thanks are due to Rebecca for her accurate and timely accounting.)

Election Results

The election results have been tallied and the following have been elected to the Board of Directors for UABRA: Ron Acton, Bettie Morales, John Ballard, Julius Linn, and Linda Godfrey. We welcome each of these individuals to the Board and they will be meeting with the Board when it meets on April 27. They will be introduced and installed at the May meeting.

The Board and all members salute and thank the following Board members who will be rotating off the board for their dedicated service: Rebecca L. Bradley, Treasurer; Peggy Gentry, Chairperson of Refreshments; Kay Moore, Chairperson of Giving Projects; Garvin Phillips, twice elected Board Member, and Erma R. Wesley, Membership Secretary. I am personally indebted to these individuals for their contribution to making my job easy and fun. I know all these folks will remain in close contact with UABRA.

I wish each of you only the very best. I hope you are afforded the opportunity to enjoy your grand and great-grandchildren, to travel to places you have dreamed of, to have a happy and fulfilling retirement, and to have the security of knowing that your dreams can become a reality. I hope you can do all this with the greatest of dignity.



Jack Bradford, President
The University of Alabama at Birmingham
Retirees' Association