

THE KERNEL

A Publication of the Kentucky Public Retiree

Issue 107

December 2013

President's Perspective



While addressing participants at our annual conference at Cumberland Falls, I took the opportunity to address ineffectiveness at getting information to members, other public retirees and the general public. One of the challenges noted is the broad diversity of media consuming habits of retirees who span an age range of nearly 50 years. For example, a retiree 46 years old may use multiple computers, including a desktop, a laptop, a tablet, a smart phone, and more to obtain and share information. While the long retired 93-year-old may only watch TV and listen to radio. Some long-retired read, but they do not utilize electronically transmitted information. Instead, they may read newspapers because they like the physical and visual effects of holding the paper. Others consume information from all sources. These diverse habits pose a challenge for this organization to communicate effectively with everyone.

Producing media is expensive. One only needs to take into account the newspapers and magazines that are now defunct due to a lack of subscriptions. Plus, the cost of postage sent some down into a deep financial hole where they ceased to exist. When asking KPR members how they wish to receive news from our organization, a growing number rely on emails and websites. For those familiar with the media, email is easy and inexpensive where sending letters by postal mail is both costly and time consuming. Although it is expensive and KPR has limited funds, we still utilize all forms of media, including this edition of *The Kernel*, since reaching all members is a firmly held value of the organization.

While this scenario seems daunting, there is reason for optimism due to the support of local chapters. Most of KPR's chapters recently elected to commit funds for a public relations initiative to improve communication with all public retirees and the general public! These commitments represent more than an act of trust in the leadership of this organization. Surely these actions make a powerful statement: WE CAN IMPROVE COMMUNICATIONS WITH A POSITIVE IMPACT ON MORE RETIREES!

With these commitments from chapters, the KPR State Board decided to proceed with plans to contract for public relations services. A broad plan was reviewed by the board during its last quarterly meeting. That plan focuses on the four-month period paralleling the 2014 Session of the General Assembly. A key component of KPR's public relations will focus on supplying materials for use by chapters. This could include any or all of the following: newspaper items such as op-eds, opinions, letters to the editor, paid and unpaid advertising, electronic newsletters, social media spots, YouTube videos and whatever works! But to know what is needed, we need to hear from members. Feedback can be provided through the website at www.kentuckypublicretirees.org or Facebook. More media sites will be added in the future to extend KPR's public relations.

New KPR Manager



We are pleased to announce that Floyd Parrish is our new manager. He began work on December 1st. That's just in time for the organization's busy season of renewing memberships. Mr. Parrish retired with 30 years service in Kentucky state government. He retired as Director of the Division of Community Health Services in the Office of Inspector General. He lives in Frankfort, where he has been a member of the local KPR chapter since his retirement in 2004. Mr. Parrish's qualifications meet and exceed all skills specified for this position. He graduated from Eastern Kentucky University with a degree in journalism, and attended Kentucky State University where he earned 18 hours in computer science. In speaking with references he had listed, the search team discovered that he was not only capable of doing this job, but was very well liked in all the jobs he had held. I hope you will join me in welcoming Floyd to our team!



Retirement Report by Shirley Clark, KRS Liaison

The Kentucky Retirement System (KRS) Board of Trustees held their quarterly board meeting on December 5, 2013.

The yearly actuarial valuation for the year ending June 30, 2013, was presented by the Kentucky Retirement System's actuarial firm, Cavanaugh McDonald. With the passage of Senate Bill 2 (SB 2) which requires 100% funding, the employer rates needed to accomplish this were presented and approved by the board for the next two fiscal years ending June 30, 2016. Kentucky Employee Retirement System (KERS) and State Police Retirement System (SPRS) require \$755 million each year to be fully funded in the upcoming biennium.

The unfunded liability of KRS only changed slightly because of the legislature's promise to fully fund the system and the current better investment returns. The annual report will be posted to the KRS website in early January.

The Board approved Humana Insurance to continue with the Medicare eligible retirees insurance plan for 2015. There will be only minimal increases in the insurance coverage and rates.

A new provision passed in SB 2 established a thirteen member Public Pension Oversight Board. This Board consists of six legislators and seven private citizens. Members of this board have been named with Senator Joe Bowen and Representative Brent Yonts co-chairing the committee.

The replacement of the elected County Employee Retirement System (CERS) board member who resigned recently was deferred to the February board meeting. This delay allows KRS time to post the position on their web site so that persons interested in this position may apply. The replacement will be approved by the full board, rather than just the elected members. The member selected will finish out the remaining three years of the term.

The ballot for two new board members to replace Bob Henson and Susan Smith on the KERS Board of Trustees will be mailed in late January 2014 to all KERS members. The two elected members will take office April 1, 2014. Five candidates will be on the ballot for the two positions. KPR held their quarterly meeting on December 3, 2013, and invited all five candidates to attend and speak with us. Four of the five candidates attended. Personal family circumstances prevented the fifth candidate from attending. All five of these candidates are members of KPR. They are Vince Lang, Mary Helen Peter, Larry Totten, Jacqueline Warner, and Peter Wolff. After the presentations by the candidates, the board held discussion on selecting two of these candidates to endorse, but the board voted unanimously to not endorse any of the candidates, since all five are members of our organization. Candidates have been invited to attend chapter meetings throughout the state to let our members get to know them. Detailed information regarding all candidates is available on KRS's website. Click on "KERS Election." For those KPR members who do not have computers, please contact your local chapters for assistance.

Legislative Report by Shirley Clark, Legislative Chair

The 2014 session of the General Assembly will begin on January 7th and end April 15th. There will be many requests for funding from various governmental agencies as well as the private sector. So many agencies (state employees, retirees and other entities) have been neglected in the past years that even with a slight improvement in our economy, there won't be enough to go around.

Therefore, this will be a very busy and important session for KPR and retirees all over the state. There are numerous articles we have all read about the crisis in pension plans both nationally and here in Kentucky. We face the Chamber of Commerce continuing to beef up their efforts to cut our health care benefits and pensions with even a possibility of testing our inviolable contract! The news of various CERS member groups wanting to remove themselves from the KRS system is of great concern and would be very detrimental to our system.

We all know how difficult it will be to secure a pre-funded cost of living increase (COLA) for our retirees for the next two years, but we must make the attempt!! There are so many retirees receiving very small retirement and Social Security checks who deserve our efforts to give them some relief in order to make ends meet.

It is interesting to note that Representative Robert Benvenuti from Lexington has prefiled a bill requiring all retirement systems to disclose pension data of all retirees on the web sites of the various systems. Representative Larry Clark from Louisville has filed a gaming bill, which requires wagering taxes levied by this act to be dedicated to certain items, and one of these items is the Kentucky Public Pension Stabilization Fund.

The KPR Board of Directors held their quarterly meeting on December 3, 2013, and came up with a list of legislative items that have been mentioned in the past couple of months that deserves our attention. We went through the list one by one and voted to support, oppose or remain neutral. The following is this list:

- **Full funding of KRS as passed in SB 2. -#1 SUPPORT PRIORITY**
- **A dedicated source for future revenue to KRS that would place funds in KRS for future full funding. -SUPPORT**
- **Funding by the legislature for a COLA for the next two years. -SUPPORT**
- **Change the current statute that requires KRS to be 100% funded before funding a COLA to be changed to 80% funding. -SUPPORT**
- **KRS board changes that would place elected board trustees back in the majority. -SUPPORT**
- **A provision to change the statute to fill elected board member vacancies by elected members only rather than currently filling it with all board members. -SUPPORT**
- **Allowing CERS members to withdraw from the KRS system. -OPPOSE**
- **Bills introduced that would reduce retirees' insurance and pensions. -OPPOSE**
- **Placing retiree pension information on KRS website. -OPPOSE**
- **Placing retirees and current employees on the Public Pension Oversight Board. -Would be in favor, but voted to remain NEUTRAL**
- **Modifying the Cash Balance Plan taking effect 1/1/14. -NEUTRAL**

More information on these items will be forwarded to the chapter presidents, chapter legislative chairs, and members in the coming months. We feel sure other bills will be introduced, and we will be watching them closely. KPR will continue to work with the Kentucky Public Pension Coalition during this upcoming session on mutually agreed upon goals and objectives.

Chapter legislative chairs and chapter presidents must get their telephone tree and email lists ready as quickly as possible. You need to be prepared for alerting members to make calls and write letters and emails when a bill is introduced on the agenda, in committee, or for a vote. This could sometimes happen very quickly.

Numbers available for contacting legislators and to access other information are the following: 1-800-372-7181 is the number for leaving messages with your legislators. You may also call them at home. The status of any bill we are watching can be obtained by calling: 1-866-840-2835. To contact the Governor's office call 502-564-2611. Email addresses for all legislators can be found on the LRC home page: <http://www.lrc.ky.gov/> Click on "quick links" to go directly to the listing for all of them.

There probably will be many alerts sent out during this session. Go to our website, www.kentuckypublicretirees.org and place your email on the home page to be able to receive these alerts.

This would also be a great time to sign up new members. Let them know what is going on, and convince them to join our organization with free dues for the first year.

Membership Article by Betty Hawkins

Membership figures reflect a 4.78 percent increase over this same period last year. With all of the very serious issues facing retirees in the 2014 legislative session (fully funding of our system, the opportunity to again receive a COLA, and continuation of health insurance benefits), this small increase in membership numbers, while welcomed, still is certainly not enough to support the needs of our organization.

All of you, as KPR members, need to get serious about doing your part to increase the membership numbers in each of your local chapters. While many of you are not able to attend and participate at your monthly meetings, you, as a member, can certainly make an impact in our numbers by asking your eligible friends, family members, and other acquaintances to consider becoming members. Each one of you reading this article can have an impact. In addition, you are helping ensure that your retirement benefits remain intact.

As we approach the beginning of 2014, please remember any new member you enlist will receive free membership for the calendar year and will not be billed for the annual membership dues until January 2015. I would also recommend to new members that if they wish to pay when they sign up, the payment will be credited to their 2015 membership fee. Our annual dues fee of \$15.00 is only \$1.25 a month and less than the price of a cup of coffee.

KPR will again be conducting our 2014 Annual Membership Contest which will run January 1, 2014 through May 31, 2014 with the following cash prizes: first place prize - \$50 to the individual who recruits the largest number of new members, second place prize - \$35, and third place prize - \$15. We will also be awarding \$25 to the chapter which has the largest percentage increase. During the annual meeting a random \$25 drawing will be held for those members who recruited new members. Every member who recruits a new member has an opportunity to win this prize. Winners will be announced and recognized at the annual business meeting in Louisville on June 13.

The 2014 dues statements were mailed early this year to avoid the increase in postage charges in January 2014. Many of you may have already received your statements. If you did not receive a statement, you have either pre-paid prior to the billing date or you have paid for multiple years. If you have a question concerning your billing, you are encouraged to e-mail our administrative manager at: kprmanager@gmail.com or you can call at 502-437-9408. Please remember to send your payment to KPR, P. O. Box 4082, Frankfort, KY 40604. Your continued membership as well as recruitment of other members is needed.



Barren River Our chapter held its monthly meeting on November 18, 2013, at the Barren River Area Development District Office. All members attending participated in a potluck Thanksgiving Brunch which was enjoyed by all. Local area legislators were also invited to attend, but due to other commitments on this date were not able to attend.

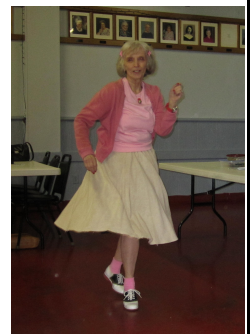
We discussed the importance of increasing chapter membership and keeping our chapter members informed regarding upcoming events. This will be our main focus in the upcoming months. Due to the upcoming holidays, our chapter's next scheduled meeting is Monday, January 20, 2014.

Bluegrass East Our chapter did not meet in August. We met in September and were guests of R.J. Corman Railroad Group in Nicholasville. We learned how the late Mr. Corman established and grew his railroad company. Our October meeting was the annual trip to Natural Bridge State Park at Slade. Our speaker was Mr. Jim Gazay of West Liberty. Mr. Gazay is in charge of the Morgan County Long Term Recovery from the 2012 tornado damage. We saw pictures of the area before and after the tornado. Also, we were shown pictures of how the recovery is taking place. Our chapter voted to donate \$100 toward the recovery effort. In November, we met at the Golden Corral in Lexington and will meet there again in December for our Christmas program.

We invite all members of the Bluegrass East Chapter who do not attend our monthly meeting to come and join us the second Wednesday of each month at the Golden Corral in Lexington at 11:45 a.m.

Bluegrass West In October, Dr. Joe Dobner, an orthopedic specialist, gave a presentation regarding anterior hip replacement. The benefits of this surgery are: faster recovery, less pain, smaller incision, less blood loss and less scarring. In November, we had our traditional Thanksgiving meal which was enjoyed by all. One of our own chapter members, Carole Mahoney (pictured right), entertained us with some very humorous pantomime dance numbers.

Chapter members also worked at the Humana insurance meeting on November 4, to increase our membership by distributing copies of our newsletter and membership brochures. We were able to obtain some new members. In December, we are having another great meal followed by some more humorous entertainment by Janice Osborne. In January, we will have all five of the KERS candidates speak to our membership.



Covered Bridge On Oct. 10, 2013, Rep. Donna Mayfield of the 73rd District was our guest speaker at our annual outing at Carter Caves State Park. She said the COLA was a necessity rather than a gift.

Pictured below are our officers for 2013-2014: Kathy Voiers-Secretary, Robert Gossett-Treasurer, June Pugh-President, Jack Litton-Vice President



Our attendance has been running around 25-35, and members are enjoying the time of fellowship, guest speakers, and keeping up with the situations regarding their retirement. A goal for Covered Bridge is to increase membership.

The Covered Bridge Chapter has had interesting speakers at their monthly meetings with a variety of topics from Kentucky legislators to interesting stories of Fleming County history by Museum Coordinator, Brenda Plummer. At our September meeting, Sannie Overly from the 72nd District was our guest speaker. Ms. Overly shared her concerns with the retirement underfunding.

Our chapter held our October meeting at Carter Caves with Donna Mayfield, representative from the 73rd District as guest speaker.

Cumberland Valley The chapter met at Golden Corral in London on August 13. Our guest speaker was Betty Pendergrass, an elected member of the Kentucky Retirement System Board of Trustees. Ms. Pendergrass stressed funding for the system. In September, we met at Thompson Park in Barbourville. This was our 2nd Annual CV pot-luck picnic. Great food was enjoyed by all.



The CV Chapter met in November at the Golden Corral in London. Our guest speaker, Shirley Clark, stressed full funding of the system, membership, and contacting legislators. Another guest was Ray Brittain from the Lake Cumberland Chapter.

Our next meeting is scheduled for December 10, 2013 at 1:00 at the Knox County Public Library in Barbourville. Our guest speaker will be State Senate President Robert Stivers.

Green River Our chapter meets the second Wednesday of each month at Ryan's Steakhouse in Owensboro. Our guest speaker for July was Mr. Scott Heath, a technical adviser with the Kenergy Corporation which supplies electricity to a large number of area residents. Mr. Heath gave a very informative presentation regarding energy use around the home and ways to conserve and save money in the process.

In August, our guest speaker was Terri Ann Tong, a physical trainer at the Owensboro YMCA. She gave an informative presentation about programs available at the Y in Owensboro. In September, we discussed recruiting new members. In October, representatives from the chapter attended the presentations for Medicare eligible members and distributed recruitment material. In November, Mr. J. T. Fulkerson, newly appointed trustee of the KRS Board, discussed a lot of topics related to our retirement. Although he is very new on the board, he has an extensive background in finance.

Jefferson Regional In October, our chapter's speakers were Connie Pettyjohn, Director of Retiree Health Care at KRS; Brian Tolls, CMS Communications Coordinator; and Stephanie Heller and Rick McHale, from Humana insurance. In November, Representative Denny Butler discussed the upcoming 2014 Legislative Session and Senate Bill 2. Members expressed their concern that the funding mechanism for retirees' pensions was not adequate. Representative Butler encouraged retirees to voice their concerns to all of their legislators. He advised that his main focus would be determining new sources of revenue. At the December meeting, Craig Catlett, Professor of Communication, Eastern Kentucky University, discussed relationships and the importance of listening.

There will be no January meeting since it falls on New Year's Day, but members are invited to attend North Central's meeting on the second Wednesday at Jumbo Restaurant on Hurstbourne Parkway.

Lake Cumberland In November, our program focused on ways to address the problems with the funding of KRS. Our members participated and offered suggestions. Kentucky KPR President and chapter member, Paul Guffey had asked that we concentrate on this topic. Pictured at left from left are Junior Feese, Donna Feese, Margie Collins, Jean Sanders, Pat Bell, and Claude Tiller. John



Engle, Lake Cumberland Chapter President, and Jeanette Burris, Lake Cumberland Chapter Vice-President, began their duties this month. Our Chapter's new Membership Chairperson is Peggy Black.

In August, our guest speaker was Arlene B. Mofield, Senior Friends Adviser at Lake Cumberland Regional Hospital. She spoke about some of the benefits and activities the organization provides for its members. In September, our guest speaker was Jack Keeney, Executive Director of God's Food Pantry in Somerset, Kentucky. He spoke about how God's Food Pantry serves our area. Our chapter voted to make a donation to help in this effort. In October, our meeting was held in Columbia at Cranmer Dining Hall at Lindsey Wilson College. Adair County officials attending included Junior Feese, PVA; Rick Wilson, jailer; Harold Burton, District 1 magistrate; and Pat Bell, former mayor.



Lincoln Trail At our August meeting, there were 42 members present, and Stephanie Heller, Senior Account Executive with Humana insurance spoke concerning Medicare Advantage. Her presentation was very informative. She is pictured at left.

A discussion was held concerning a service project. A discussion was also held concerning a road trip in October to either Watermill Restaurant in Cave City or the Iron Skillet in Glendale. This will be decided at our next meeting.

In new business, Judith Lesher attended a meeting in Frankfort regarding membership. She encouraged everyone to reach out for new members. Charlie Brackett reported two vacancies will be coming up on the retirement board, and we will be receiving voting information. Sharon Bush is selling Hardin County Homemakers Cookbooks. Proceeds go toward scholarships.



Pennyrile Becky Dorris Solomon, a local author, is pictured at left with Chapter President Kay Scott. Ms. Solomon was our guest speaker for our September meeting. She gave us a sample reading of her latest book, *Ghosts Along the Tradewater*. She has written other books since her retirement.

Peyton Adams, Legislative Chairman, attended the September board meeting in Frankfort for President, Kay Bard. He gave reports from the Legislative and Retirement Chairs. In October, we met at the Country Cupboard in Madisonville. Mr. Steve Ray, a retired funeral director and local historian, gave an unusual program when he told the group of several notable and infamous burials in Kentucky. At our meeting on December 5, handouts of the Retirement & Legislative Reports were distributed to the members. It was voted to give a donation to the State Police

Children Shoppers and to allow for the games and participation event of members.

Purchase At our October meeting, President Wolff updated members concerning the KPR State Board Meeting, and the importance of each local chapter doing their part to increase membership was discussed. Our chapter set up a table to recruit new members at the Humana insurance meeting at the Paducah Convention Center on October 25. Chapter members were also encouraged to provide suggested topics of interest for future programs.

At the November meeting, chapter members were provided with the listing of those individuals from the counties covered by our chapter who had retired during the third quarter of 2013. This is usually the most popular time to retire. Members were requested to make contacts and recruit these people for KPR membership. It was also decided that our chapter would make arrangements to have a Purchase Chapter representative available to recruit members at any of the pre-retirement conferences held in the area.

FOND FARWELL MARY LOU PHILLIPS


1939-2013



Mary Lou Phillips passed away on August 16, 2013. Ms. Phillips was a charter member of the Cumberland Valley Chapter. She served as a Clay County coordinator from our beginning until the time of her passing. Ms. Phillips was a kind and thoughtful person. She was faithful in attendance at our chapter meetings and dedicated to our KPR mission. WE WILL MISS HER. She is

shown here (seated far right) at The 2013 Annual Conference at Cumberland Falls. Shown with her are Sherry Reid and Rosemary Wyatt standing and Penny Robinson and Betty Ledford. Betty and Mary Lou were sisters.

Chapter Locations

<u>Barren River Chapter</u> 10 AM (CT), 3rd Monday EVERY MONTH BRADD Center 177 N. Graham Avenue (off Plum Springs Rd—N side of B. Green) Bowling Green, KY Contact Sharon Linhart (270) 781-2381 for information	<u>Fivco Chapter</u> 11:30 AM (ET), 3rd Monday Giovanni's on Greenup Avenue Ashland, KY Contact Morris Wells (606) 465-5784 for information	<u>North Central Chapter</u> 11:30 AM (ET), 2nd Wednesday Jumbo Buffet—back room (Stoneybrook Shopping Center) 2731 S. Hurstbourne Parkway Louisville, KY Contact Charles Klunder (502) 454-3493 for information
<u>Bluegrass East Chapter</u> 12:00 PM (ET), 2nd Wednesday Golden Corral 185 E. New Circle Road Lexington, KY Contact Claude Conner (859) 272-5993 for information	<u>Green River Chapter</u> 12:00 PM (CT), 2nd Wednesday (lunch at 11:30 am CT) Ryan's Steakhouse 4500 Frederica St. Owensboro, KY Contact Bill Horton (270) 684-8059 for information	<u>Northern Kentucky Chapter</u> 11:45 AM (ET), 2nd Monday Golden Corral Orphanage Rd. at KY Rt. 17 Fort Wright, KY (I - 275, Exit 80) Contact Cathy Kunkel-Mains (859) 512-9882 for information
<u>Bluegrass West Chapter</u> 11:30 AM (ET), 3rd Tuesday VFW Franklin County Post 4075 104 E. Second St. Frankfort, KY Or Contact Lexie Southworth (502) 695-3910 for information	<u>Jefferson Regional</u> 11:30 AM (ET), 1st Wednesday Ryan's Family Steakhouse (Piccadilly Square) 5338 Bardstown Road Louisville, KY Contact Nikki Henderson ((502) 935-4083 for information	<u>Pennyrile Chapter</u> 11:30 AM (CT), 4th Thursday Country Cupboard Restaurant 518 McCoy Avenue Madisonville, KY Contact Kay Bard (270) 338-0245 for information
<u>Covered Bridge</u> 11:00 AM (ET), 2nd Thursday Double 'S' Bowling 150 Foster St. Flemingsburg, KY Contact June Pugh (606) 849-2651 for information	<u>Lake Cumberland Chapter</u> 11:30 AM (ET), 3rd Monday Golden Corral Restaurant South 27 across from Lowes Somerset, KY Contact John Engle (606) 678-2742 for information	<u>Purchase Chapter</u> 10:30 AM (CT), 1st Thursday Pizza Inn Joe Clifton Drive Paducah, KY Contact Peter Wolff (270) 362-8709 for information
<u>Cumberland Valley</u> 11:30 AM (ET), 2nd Tuesday Please Note: *Meeting locations vary, please contact Jerry Connell at (606) 521-0381 for information	<u>Lincoln Trail Chapter</u> 11:30 AM (ET), 2nd Monday Ryan's Family Steakhouse 1034 Executive Drive On US 62, just West of I-65 Elizabethtown, KY Contact Judith Lesher (270) 872-3497 for information	2014 Annual Meeting June 12-13, 2014 Holiday Inn Hurstbourne Louisville Hosted by Jefferson Regional Chapter 



Carol Mahoney



Shirley Fallin



Nov. CV Meeting



John Engle, George Brinkley, Jack Kenney



Kentucky Public Retirees
P. O. Box 4082
Frankfort, KY 40604
(502) 437-9408
[**kprmanager@gmail.com**](mailto:kprmanager@gmail.com)



Remember to visit the KPR website for important updates and Facebook access.

www.kentuckypublicretirees.org

NOTE: You MUST register on-line to receive KPR Alerts



Recruit a NEW MEMBER in 2013

Kentucky Public Retirees Application Form

*Applicants MUST qualify by being a member of one or more of the following systems (please circle all that apply):

KERS CERS SPRS

- ☐ Membership dues FREE 1st year* (membership runs Jan-Dec. Free dues end 12/31 of the year).
- ☐ Membership annual dues are \$15 per year - I want to pay for my 2nd year now.
- ☐ Existing members: annual renewal dues of \$15 is enclosed.

Mail to: Kentucky Public Retirees
P. O. Box 4082
Frankfort, KY 40604



Date _____

Name _____ Chapter (if known) _____

Address (include Dr/St/Ln) _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

County _____ Telephone (_____) _____

Email Address _____

Referred by: _____ (All information will be kept confidential)