

The Grapevine

A Newsletter to SC State Tech Retirees

from the SCTEA Retirees' Chapter Coordinating Committee

Fall, 2008; Volume VII, Issue 1

Officers for 2008-2009

J. E. Cox, Chair

Ann Osborne, Chair-Elect

Betty Jean Craft, Recorder

Alex Strozier, Fiscal Officer

Lena McCoy, Immediate Past Chair

From The Chair:

Greetings! Exciting activities are in store for SCTEA and our Retirees Chapter in 2009.

"Dreamweavers Working Together for a Prosperous South Carolina" is the theme for the annual SCTEA conference at Myrtle Beach. (See Joe Santaniello's comments below). This year, in addition to the usual sessions on Retirement and Insurance, we have arranged two new sessions: The SC Deferred Compensation Program and Role Reversal – Children Taking Care of their Parents. You won't want to miss any of these sessions.

We will hold our Retiree Spring Rally May 14th at the Midlands Airport Campus. A light breakfast starts the day with 2-3 topics of interest to retirees, followed by a well-planned meal. And a \$5.00 registration fee covers it all. I look forward to seeing you at both events and am proud to be serving as your Chair for the current year. J. E. Cox, Chair, Retirees' Chapter

Spring Rally!

May 14th

Look for brochure with registration form and agenda in your early April mail.

"OLD PEOPLE'S SPRING BREAK"

If you lived in the Carolinas when you were in high school or college, did you dance the Carolina Shag? Do you like to party with large crowds of people your own age? Do you like to go to Myrtle Beach in the spring and fall? If you answered "yes" to the above questions and you haven't attended an SOS event, you have a treat in store!

SOS (Society of Stranders) was founded by a group of people dedicated to preserving the Carolina Shag (our state dance). The Association of Carolina Shag Clubs (ACSC) and SOS now put together two great ten-day long parties at the Ocean Drive area of North Myrtle Beach: Spring Safari and Fall Migration. Even if you don't dance, it's fun to watch the thousands of people from all over the Southeast who attend these events.

Each of the April and September events has its own defining attractions. Spring Safari's is the parade that takes place on Main Street of Ocean Drive on the Safari's second Saturday. Many of the shag clubs that are members of ACSC participate. 2009 will be the parade's fifteenth outing. I guarantee you will laugh until you cry if you witness this spectacle.

Fall Migration's defining attractions are Fun Sunday and Fun Monday held on the Migration's first

Sunday and Monday. Ocean Drive closes off its main streets, live bands and vocal groups abound, and everybody gathers together for a couple of great outdoor parties.

I've heard each of these ACSC/SOS events called "the old people's spring break." I think that's as good a definition as any recalling my spring break days at Ocean Drive in the mid-sixties. I've been attending Spring Safari and Fall Migration since 2005. I wish I had known about them before then.

For more information and dates for SOS/ACSC events and other shag events, see shagdance.com. Ann Osborne, Midlands TC

From the SCTEA President

I am both excited and honored to be the 2008-2009 president of SCTEA and working so closely with your Retirees' Chapter as we plan the SCTEA annual conference.

The Annual or Spring conference this year is February 19 thru 21 at the Hilton Myrtle Beach Resort.. While the conference will once again be held at the Hilton in Myrtle Beach, it is moving to their new onsite conference center. This will give us more room for additional vendors, sessions and other activities. This conference is the only opportunity for employees and retirees of the technical college system to get together, learn from each other, and enjoy each other's company. It is shaping up to be both exciting and informative with over 25 sessions for the 3 day period. The conference keynote speaker is a name familiar to most South Carolinians. Darla Moore, business philanthropist and founder of the Palmetto Institute has graciously agreed to be the Friday morning keynote speaker. You **don't** want to miss her session.

I would like to thank the Retirees' Chapter and all our retirees for their help and support. I encourage all of you to join SCTEA. Your \$5.00 membership fee goes a long way in helping us with our conference activities. As a retiree and paid-up member, your conference fee is waived. I look forward to seeing you in February! Joe Santaniello, SCTEA President 2008-2009



Retirees' Chapter officers, from left: Alex Strozier, Low Country; Ann Osborne, Midlands; Lena McCoy, Northeastern; J.E. Cox, Florence-Darlington. Absent, Betty Jean Craft, State Office

Book Review Corner

One of this summer's most pleasant surprises was a masterpiece novel written by a newcomer: ***The Story of Edgar Sawtelle***. Rumors of the quality of the read first spread by word-of-mouth, but recently the book was picked up as Oprah's Book Club choice. First-time novelist David Wroblewski has written an astoundingly accomplished book; he needs no help from Oprah in marketing it.

In the novel, a child is born into the Sawtelle family, whose livelihood involves a family business of breeding and raising famous dogs bred for temperament, intuition, and intelligence. Edgar, the child, is found to be mute. One of the Sawtelle dogs, a puppy named Almondine, possesses amazingly acute senses and canny intuition and becomes the child's voice and companion. They become inseparable. When just a toddler, Edgar learns to communicate by signing, and Almondine becomes adept at reading his signs and interpreting his thoughts. As Edgar grows and begins to assume a larger role in the dog business, he one day finds his injured father lying on the floor. Frustrated because he is unable to call for help, Edgar blames himself for his father's death.

With the death of the father, the peaceful life of the Sawtelle family is forever disrupted by events set in motion by the death. Edgar is forced to take on responsibility that requires him to mature quickly and face the somber realities of adulthood.

This amazing coming-of-age book displays a depth of insight into the hearts and minds of the characters. Its copious details allow the reader a glimpse into the science of dog breeding as well as the intimate emotions and tensions in the characters' lives. One innovative storytelling technique Wroblewski uses is allowing the dog Almondine to serve as a character in the story. Speaking of the first time the dog sees the newborn, the narrator says, "That would have been the first time Almondine saw Edgar's hands. In a way, that would have been the first time she saw him make a sign."

If you are looking for an exciting and mesmerizing read that "grabs" you and won't let you go, this is an excellent choice. After finishing it several weeks ago, I still find myself thinking about the book and mulling over the well-drawn characters and plot. Cheryl Lopanik, Technical College of the Low Country

Not to suggest that I would be interested in reading some wild, wicked novel, but the title ***The Shack*** certainly implies all kinds of racy, immoral activity in my mind. This #1 New York Times best seller and #1 best seller in the country last week is far removed from any of that. In fact, it could be described as being rather mystical and mysteriously spiritual.

Wm. Paul Young, a not well-known Canadian born author, has created a masterpiece of man's confrontation with death and life and even God. In my way of thinking, I suggest you sit down and read The Shack in one sitting for the full impact of this very unusual, intriguing story. Jimmy Stewart, Greenville TC

We're On the Web!

Go to www.sctea.org and click on Retirees' Chapter. It's plain vanilla but it's chock full of useful information you need to keep up with SCTEA-R activities! Contact information, meeting dates and minutes, copies of The Grapevine, info on upcoming events — it's all there.

Join SCTEA Now!

It only takes a minute. Give your name, last four digits of your Social Security Number and \$5 to your local SCTEA representative.

Your SCTEA and Retirees' Chapter staff work for you...give them your support...keep up-to-date...stay in touch!

N.B. Telephone numbers for SCTEA college and Retiree Chapter representatives are available elsewhere on this site and are not repeated here.

Web Extras. Putting together The Grapevine is always an interesting experience. There are either too few or too many articles; the articles are either too short or too long. Here are the ones that didn't make it into the print version this year because of space limitations. (Ed.)

DETER-DETECT-DEFEND AVOID THEFT

Identity theft is a serious crime. It occurs when your personal information is stolen and used without your knowledge to commit fraud or other crimes. Identity theft can cost you time and money. It can destroy your credit and ruin your good name.

Deter identity thieves by safeguarding your information.

Shred financial documents and paperwork with personal information before you discard them.

Protect your Social Security number. Don't carry your Social Security card in your wallet or write your Social Security number on a check. Give it out only if absolutely necessary or ask to use another identifier.

Don't give out personal information on the phone, through the mail, or over the internet unless you know who you are dealing with.

Never click on links sent in unsolicited emails; instead, type in a web address you know. Use firewalls, anti-spyware, and anti-virus software to protect your home computer; kept them up-to-date. Visit **OnGuardOnline.gov** for more information.

Don't use an obvious password like your birth date, your mother's maiden name, or the last four digits of your Social Security number.

Keep your personal information in a secure place at home, especially if you have roommates, employ outside help, or are having work done in your home. Copied: Deter-Detect-Defend, AVOID Theft, Federal Trade Commission Jack Wise, Central Carolina TC

Medicare

The 10.6 percent cut in Medicare payments for medical services is history. And there is a 1.1 percent increase in payments as of Jan 1, 2009. BUT...isn't there always a 'but'? This was another "band aid" fix and didn't change the permanent statutory rate-setting formula. A 21 percent cut in Medicare payments lies ahead (in January, 2010) if Congress doesn't fix it again before then. Be informed and let your congressional representatives know where you stand on this issue. (Ed.)

Book Review

Nurture Nature/Nurture Health: Your Health and the Environment, by Mitchell L. Gaynor, M.D. How important is the environment to our health? Dr. Gaynor gives insight into the intricate relationship between nature and health. It's important to care for our planet, because, in doing so, we care for our own health. Did you know that chemicals can store in our bodies for decades? Most of the chemicals found in the human body today were not present in our bodies 60 years ago.

There are many ways to protect the environment. Limiting our use of chemicals is one simple, yet very effective way to do this. The author gives many simple solutions to our "chemically

overloaded” society. Here are a few solutions: Use simple baking soda to clean sinks and tubs; Use vinegar in a pump-spray bottle to clean windows, mirrors and chrome; use vegetable oil with lemon to polish furniture.

Air pollution, acid rain, greenhouse gases, ozone depletion, water pollution. We can make a difference. We must consider the consequences of what we do – our lives depend on it.
(Lena McCoy, Northeast TC)

SOUTHERN PECAN PEPPER GLAZE BAKE

½ c. Mayonnaise

8 oz. pkg. cream cheese

1c. grated cheddar cheese

2 green onions, chopped

6 Ritz crackers, crushed

8 slices bacon, cooked and crumbles

½ c. Rose and Ivy Southern Pecan Pepper Glaze (get this at www.bellbuckle.com for \$7.50--will make 2 recipes).

Mix mayonnaise, cheese, cream cheese and onions in a greased quiche or pie plate. Top with crackers and bake at 350 degrees for 10 minutes. Remove from oven and top with bacon. Drizzle Rose & Ivy Southern Pecan Pepper Glaze over all and serve with crackers.