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MESSAGE From Lois Turetzky, Ed.D Unit Leader



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**Unit
Leader's
Message**
Lois Turetzky, Ed.D

Culture War in Education
Lois Turetzky, Ed.D

According to Wikipedia, “a culture war is a cultural conflict between social groups and the struggle for dominance of their values, beliefs, and practices. It commonly refers to topics on which there is general societal disagreement and polarization in societal values”. In general, and in the United States in particular, cultural wars are political and divisive. It involves ideological philosophies and differences between parties and groups: Democrats and Republicans, traditionalists and conservatives, liberals and progressives. It manifests itself in issues such as racism, homosexuality, gun control, censorship, abortion, transgender and religious values.

Free public education in America for many years stayed non-controversial. Schools, for the most part, remained neutral. If parents wanted a religious education, they enrolled their children in parochial day schools or after school programs. One key issue that remained controversial over the years was the teaching of Evolution. Today, more than ever, divisive social and political issues have entered the school arena in an adversarial way. In the last election, we saw how one of these issues infiltrated our educational system. Virginia was a perfect example of how Governor Youngkin used the teaching of Critical

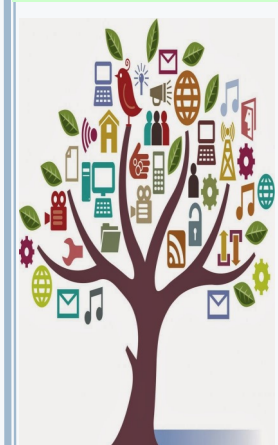
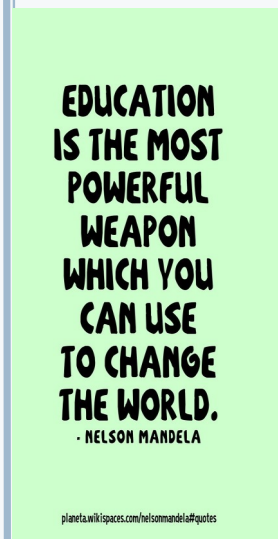
Race Theory as one of his main campaign issues. Critical Race theory was not even taught in Virginia public schools but he made it a hot political issue.

Ralph Reed in 1996, a Christian Right Leader, advocated for religious conservatives to run and win school board elections. He said: “I would rather have 1000 school board members than one president and no school board members.” He believed that these conservative members could control issues such as prayer in school, sex education and evolution. In many parts of the country this was true. Over the past few years, the focus shifted somewhat from religious to historical views and values. In May of 2021 on a Podcast, Steve Bannon said: “The path to save the nation is very simple - it’s going to go through the school boards”. On the nightly news, we saw images of fights breaking out at school board meetings throughout the country on various social and political issues.

As of June 2021, the following states have signed into law bills that ban the teaching of Critical Race Theory and discussion related to racism: Idaho, Iowa, Oklahoma, Tennessee and Texas. Other states that have laws pending in their legislature are Arizona, Arkansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Michigan, New Hampshire, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Utah, West Virginia and Wisconsin.

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In a number of school districts, parents are objecting to the reading and teaching of certain books in their schools and want books banned from the classroom and school library. The American Library Association keeps track of these complaints. A school in a district in Seattle, Washington ended the teaching of *To Kill a Mockingbird* from its Eighth-grade curriculum because of its racial theme and overtones. In Polk County, Florida, 16 books were removed and under review because they are thought to have “obscene material”. Two of the books were: Khaled Hosseini’s “The Kite Runner” and Toni Morrison’s “Beloved”. In Palm Beach County schools, two books were pulled off the shelves: *I am Jazz* and *Call Me Max*. Books were placed in an area where students do not have access to them. In Tennessee, a school board removed the book “Maus” a book dealing with the Holocaust. Texas state legislator, Matt Krause, produced a list of 850 books that he put on a watchlist. He believes these books would make students feel: “discomfort, guilt, anguish or any other kind of psychological distress because of race or sex”.... Other books that schools are considering banning or have been banned in addition to the ones already mentioned are:

- The Handmaid’s Tale: Margaret Atwood
- Fallen Angel Walter: Dean Myers
- The Bluest Eyes: Toni Morrison
- Speak: Laurie Halse Anderson
- The Hate U Give Us: Angie Thomas
- All Blues Aren’t Blue: George M. Johnson
- Heather Has Two Mommies: Leslea Newman
- In the Dream House: Carmen Maria Machado

On March 28th, 2022, Governor DeSantis signed the Parental Rights in Education law nicknamed “Don’t Say Gay”. This prohibits teachers from mentioning anything related to gender or sexual orientation in the primary grades. The law is somewhat vague when it comes to lessons involving grades other than K- three. The provision prevents gender instruction “in a manner that is not age appropriate or developmentally appropriate for students in accordance with state standards”. Since the law provides no examples of the types of lessons that are not to be taught, parents have the right to sue the school and teachers if they consider the instruction inappropriate. This opens up a can of worms. On

April 18, 2022, Governor DeSantis announced that the Florida Department of Education rejected 54 math textbooks because they found references to critical race theory and common core. When he was asked to cite examples, he said he could not as the material was proprietary.

Teachers and administrators feel threatened, stressed and unappreciated and are leaving the field or retiring sooner than they ever thought they would. Not only the pandemic but the culture wars plaguing educators and school districts are contributing to the shortages. Teachers feel that they are being treated as the enemy. They are pawns in the political and cultural divisiveness confronting the nation today. We can only hope that these issues are resolved, and teachers have the freedom to teach the curriculum in order to promote critical thinking and meet the needs, interests and abilities of their students.

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**CSA LIAISON &
OUTREACH COORDINATOR
TO FLORIDA RETIREES**

Norm Sherman, Coordinator
Council of Supervisors & Administrators
Phone number: 561-638-6439
Email: nshermzie@aol.com

CSA Florida Liaison & Outreach Coordinator

Hi everyone! Hope all is well.

As the CSARC Florida Liaison and Outreach Coordinator, I have implemented an Outreach program for all Florida CSA retirees that has proven to be quite successful. This program has entailed responding to myriad questions, informing members of their health benefits through a monthly e-newsletter, helping members fill out special forms, visiting members at their homes, and providing important contact information to surviving spouses. I have also conducted an annual workshop on the relationship between Medicare and the CSA Retiree Chapter health benefits.

As I have often said, the success of this program depends, in part, on you. Notify me ASAP of any member or his/her spouse/registered significant other who is in need of help. Second, volunteer to be part of the Outreach program. Those interested should contact me either by phone or e-mail (see below). Your help is greatly appreciated.

CSA Retiree Welfare Fund & CSA Retiree Chapter Benefits

CSA retirees are extremely fortunate the CSA Retiree Welfare Fund and CSA Retiree Chapter offer a multitude of supplemental health benefits free of charge. These benefits, which apply to both non-Medicare-eligible and Medicare-eligible members, as well as their spouses/registered significant others, are supplemental to your primary and secondary medical coverages.

Unfortunately, too many members are unaware of many of these benefits. They spend thousands of

dollars on health-related items, such as home health aides, before they find out the cost is reimbursable.

Where can you find out about these benefits?

Recently, you should have received an updated booklet entitled "Health Benefits Program," which not only describes the CSA Welfare Retiree Fund benefits but also how to file for reimbursement of those benefits. You can also download the booklet from the CSA Welfare Fund website, www.csawf.org.

In addition, you can download the 2022 CSA Retiree Benefits Chart. This Chart contains an abridged version of the Welfare Fund benefits booklet, as well as the CSA Retiree Chapter benefits that are supplemental to many of the Fund benefits. For example, the annual maximum benefit for a home health aide is \$10,000, lifetime \$30,000. The Retiree Chapter pays an additional 20% of the Fund payment. That raises the annual max benefit to \$12,000 (\$10,000 + (\$10,000 x 20%)) and lifetime benefit to \$36,000 (\$30,000 + (\$30,000 x 20%).

What should you do if you have a question about a benefit?

Call the CSA Welfare Fund, CSA Retiree Chapter, or me.

Should a surviving spouse/legal significant other of a deceased CSA member pay the Cobra rate to continue receiving the benefits after the 5-year grace period is over?

That is an entirely personal matter. I do suggest, however, that the surviving spouse review the benefits which range from dental to home health aide benefits before making a decision.

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MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Marilyn Funes, Ph.D.— Membership Coordinator

We are now well into our third year of the Covid-19 Pandemic. Just when we thought things were getting better, new strains of the virus have been discovered, one of which is more contagious than the other strains. We find ourselves staying home once again for fear of catching the virus. Our daily E-mails are replete with names of our neighbors who have tested positive and who have quarantined themselves. However this does not stop our unit from planning for the future and moving forward with these plans. We have had to cancel our events for most of the year, but our Events Committee carries on. The last event on the agenda took place on Wednesday, May 18, 2022, a docent led tour of the Morikami Gardens and museum. We were looking forward to reuniting at that time. We hoped to see as many of you as possible then. I hope you safeguarded yourselves by wearing protective face masks.

As your Membership Coordinator, I am pleased to report that we gained many new members this year in spite of the losses we had due to the attrition and people moving back up north to be closer to their families. We wish our new members and our more senior members both luck and good health.



CSA Retiree Chapter of Southeast Florida regrets to announce the loss of the following members/spouses/significant others since our last Newsletter.

William K. Tolan

Our Heartfelt condolences are extended to their loved ones.



Something New: \$15 Copay

Effective January 1, 2022, members in Senior Care became responsible for a \$15 copay for PCP and specialist services. These co-payments are supposed to start after the \$233 Medicare deductible and \$50 Emblem Health deductible have been met.

Unfortunately, there have been some problems associated with co-pays which I can best explain by example.

1. The doctor charges you a \$15 copay for a visit even though you have not met your deductible. This is an example of you paying twice – once for your \$15 copay and the 2nd to meet your deductible.

The doctor charges you a \$15 copay. According to Emblem Health's Summary of Claims, they allow for the service 11.91, a difference of \$3.09. The only way you can resolve these issues is by apprising your doctors' offices. The offices should give you credit if you paid a copay before you met your deductible or paid more than you should have. I also strongly suggest you review your Emblem Health Summary of Claims and keep track of your co-payments.

Have a healthy, happy and safe summer!

Norm Sherman

CSARC Florida Liaison and Outreach Coordinator

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Ring

I hear my telephone
begin to gaily ring
so I start to wonder
what news it may bring

If it's no friend of mine
no loved one's happy voice
perhaps a robo call
not my favorite choice

What is this call's reason
does it want to give advice
is it Medicare season
some new plan to entice

Or is it about my car
do they want to guarantee
if there's ever a problem
that they will warranty

Is it from a foreign land
about my meds they infer
they have a better pharmacy
to which they would refer

Or they'd like to question
about my political thoughts
they'd like to hear ideas
about my should's or oughts

Or maybe it's a criminal
to dupe me out of dough
I won't listen for a second
I'll only answer no

Thank heaven it's a person
it is a longtime friend
so happy to talk and listen
don't want this call to end

by Lenore Kay

OUR DEMOCRACY IS IN DANGER

Morton Kugal

PAC & Legislative Chair: LI Unit

We are in danger of losing our democracy to an authoritarian style government. During the past five years, political activism has become more important than ever before. Central CSA understands this. It has a nationwide political committee which meets with all unit leaders and the political action {PAC} and legislative chairs of each unit every two months to encourage the need to learn about what's happening in the political arena.

As political and/or legislative liaisons we gather data and share it within the units at these meetings so that our members are well-informed. We use websites to look up the voting records of candidates as well as their stand on major issues important to us. We are interested in knowing their affiliation with various organizations as well as what groups support and fund them with campaign contributions or endorsements.

Every level of the potential electorate is important. Our research starts with local level candidates and continues through to our city, state-wide, Congressional and U.S. Senate seats. As CSA PAC representatives, we are looking for candidates who will best serve our members, their families, and the American people. Currently we are hoping to find and recommend CSA endorsements for candidates with pro-union positions who share our values on health care, prescription drugs, minimum wage increases, funding for police, fire, and sanitation. In addition, we need candidates who support dealing with the vital issues of climate change, quality public education, gun control, including registration and background

checks, and those who are willing to promote increasing internet bandwidth accessibility throughout the country.

Over the past several years the work of our committee has become more important because of the divisive nature of American politics. As PAC and legislative representatives, we have stepped up with increased training and research. We are well-prepared to share our data when we meet at the national level on zoom every two months. But we cannot protect our democracy by just talking to other CSA members. We need your help.

All CSA retirees, need to become more involved: volunteer to work supporting the best candidates, vote in local school and library board elections, vote in primaries and the general election; know that certain states have made it more difficult to vote. It is important to become better informed about changes that violate our rights to free and fair elections while being vigilant in protecting against gerrymandering of districts for partisan gain. In many states a voter may no longer be in the same voting district as the previous election.

Your work in the battle to save our democracy is to be politically active. Speak with family and friends. Inform them why they should or should not vote for a particular candidate. You can expand your discussion to your grandchildren. That is part of your legacy as an educator.

DO NOT SIT BACK and wait for someone else to do your job. Use your voice to save our democracy.



Florida Alliance for Retired Americans

By President Bill Sauers

Bill Sauers wrote the following in the Palm Beach Post and his Monday Alert:

On April 18, 2022, The Palm Beach Post wrote: “Rick Scott tax plan bad news for retirees”.

Like many Floridians, I’m reminded of how lucky I am to live here when Tax Day comes around each year. With no state income tax, we get to keep more of the money we earn and have an easier time saving for college, buying a house, and planning for retirement. With the cost of living going up, this provides some much-needed relief for families struggling to make ends meet.

So imagine my surprise when I saw that Senator Rick Scott recently introduced a plan for the Republican Party that would raise taxes on nearly half of all Americans, forcing seniors and working class families to pay more when they file their taxes every year. His plan also includes provisions that could sunset Medicare and Social Security, jeopardizing the health care and retirement benefits that millions of Florida seniors have spent their entire lives earning.

When others pointed out how much of a disaster his agenda would be for seniors across our state, Scott went on TV to double down on his plan. The wealthiest member of Congress, with a net worth of more than \$200 million, told working Floridians and retirees that they’re not paying their fair share.

Republicans across the country have begun echoing Scott’s calls to raise taxes for those who can least afford it. Our other Senator, Marco Rubio, has been too weak to rule out Scott’s agenda. It’s no mystery why Rubio won’t disavow Scott’s plan: he advocates cuts to Social Security and Medicare. He’s even gone so far as to say Republicans should look into cutting these essential programs to help pay for the \$1.9 trillion tax cut that he voted for as a handout to wealthy corporations.

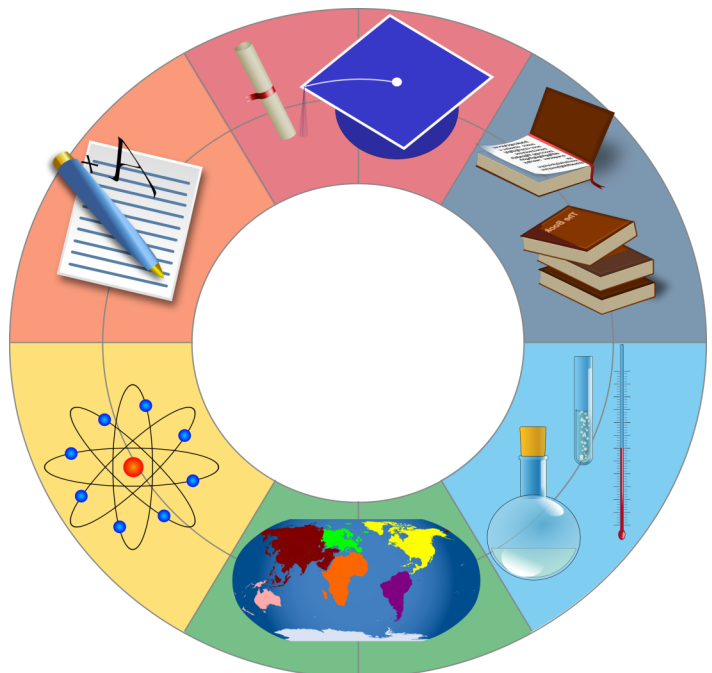
Rubio and Scott represent more seniors than almost any other U.S. Senator. But instead of backing plans to deal with the real problems retirees are facing — from high healthcare costs to rising rent to fraud schemes targeting seniors — they’re leaving us behind.

No one enjoys filing their taxes, but Floridians should take note: if Rick Scott gets his way, Tax Day in the future could be a lot more painful

**NO MATTER HOW
MANY MISTAKES YOU
MAKE OR HOW SLOW YOU
PROGRESS, YOU ARE STILL
WAY AHEAD OF EVERYONE
WHO ISN'T TRYING.**

Tony Robbins

THE ENGLISH STUDENT
WWW.THEENGLISHSTUDENT.COM



CSARC of Southeast Florida 2022-2023

Dates to Remember

Presently the following events, except for the luncheon, are scheduled to take place at the South County Civic Center located at: 16700 Jog Road, Delray Beach, Florida

Medicare Workshop: October 19, 2022
South County Civic Center, 16700 Jog Road, Delray Beach, Florida, 33446

Health and Welfare Meeting: January 9th, 2023
South County Civic Center, 16700 Jog Road, Delray Beach, Florida, 33446

General Morning Meeting and Luncheon: February 15, 2023 Indian Springs County Club
11501 El Clair Ranch Road, Boynton Beach, Florida, 33437

Health Fair: March 3, 2023
South County Civic Center, 16700 Jog Road, Delray Beach, *Florida*, 33446



Please e-mail any letters, comments, or articles of information you would like to share with the Retiree Chapter of Southeast Florida. Write to me at Lenore Kay, 8440 Lake Cypress Road, Lake Worth, FL 33467. Email to lenore8nj@yahoo.com

Thank you,

Lenore Kay, Marilyn &
Carlo Funes Editors



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In Memoriam