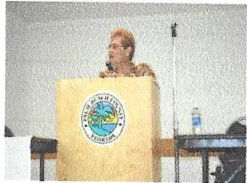




MESSAGE From Lois Turetzky, Ed.D Unit Leader



IN THIS ISSUE:



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

**The CSA's
Political Action Committee and the
2023 Florida Legislative Session**

The CSA has a very active Political Action Committee (PAC). This committee supports and works with politicians that have our backs. While the PAC committee establishes a good rapport and working relationships with local New York City and State politicians, often these people run for a national office and it pays for them to know and support our interests. So, it is in Florida. We should get to know our representatives and vote for those that take care of us.

It is important to be aware of what is happening in the Florida Legislature. Among the many bills the Florida 2023 Legislative Session had on its docket, several bills pertained to education and one involved unions and Worker's Rights. Senate bill (SB) 256 and House Bill (HB)1445: **Employee Organizations Representing Public Employees**

(Passed). There are approximately 291,000 union employees in the state and about 150,000 are teachers. This bill bans automatic deductions for all public sector union workers except for police, fire and correctional officers. Unions, other than those exempted, must demonstrate that they represent 60% or more of their bargaining constituency through dues payments. Language on the membership form must conform to state standards which encourages workers not to join the union. This bill puts 45 out of 75 teacher unions at risk of decertification. Bureaucratic requirements included in the bill make it more difficult for Unions to represent their members.

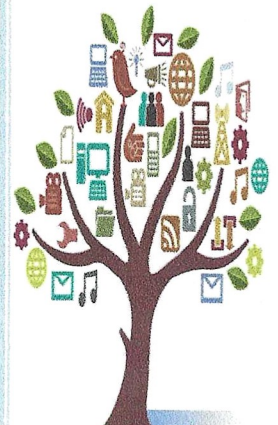
SB 202 and HB 1: **Universal Private School Vouchers (Passed).** Parents who Home School their children or send their children to Private Schools (regardless of Wealth) are entitled to an \$8000 voucher. Payment for these vouchers comes out of district public school budgets.

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**EDUCATION
IS THE MOST
POWERFUL
WEAPON
WHICH YOU
CAN USE
TO CHANGE
THE WORLD.**
- NELSON MANDELA

planetawikiimages.com/nelsonmandelaquotes



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SB 266 and HB 999 **Higher Education (Passed)**. The Board of Governors (which is a politically appointed group), have the power to review courses to make sure that they are aligned with state political views. Courses cannot promote diversity, race, equity or Critical Race Theory. The politically appointed trustees of the universities are involved in the hiring of faculty and may not hire faculty experienced in teaching diversity, equity and Critical Race Theory. They can also review a tenured professor wherever they like. A new general education requirement emphasizes the teaching of Western European Civilization. These are just some key points in the bill. As of this writing the bill is still in committee.

SB 1110 and HB 477 **Term Limits (Passed)**. For years, many counties in Florida have had no term limits for elected school board members. Some counties did. Advocates that support school privatization wanted to revise the state constitution so that terms limits would be included. They are pushing back against those school board members who want school funding to support public not private schools. Last year, the revision to the state constitution did not pass. However, the state legislature passed a 12-year term limit for all School Board members. This year's bill proposes an eight-year term limit for School Board members and County Commissioners.

SB 94 and HB 31 (2023) **Partisan Election of Members of District School Boards**. As I previously discussed in my November 2022 article: *How the Right -Wing Plans to Control School Boards and Curriculum*, many school boards have

become places fighting culture wars. Presently, school board members run unaffiliated by not declaring a party designation. This bill calls for members running for school board to be partisan. Members run under their designated party. This injects more politics into school board elections. This will be on the 2024 Ballot

SB 684 and HB 577. **Teacher Certification Fees**. This bill eliminates fees for subject certification and renewal of certification and subject examination fees for teachers for the next three years.

SB 896 HB 905 **DROP for School Employees and Personnel**. DROP (Deferred Retirement Option Program) Extension. DROP is a five-year program that allows eligible retired school employees to work and earn retirement benefits into a separate account. This bill extends DROP to eight years and addresses the need for experienced educators in the wake of teacher shortages.

SB 302 and HB 3 **Restricting Investment in the Florida Pension System (Passed)**. It is the responsibility of the pension fund managers to invest in quality funds that pay well and are as secure as can be. Environmental, Social and Corporate Governance (ESG) funds do well over time and that is why pension funds invest in them. Governor DeSantis does not support these funds as he believes it represents "wokeism". Investments in the state retirement pension system should not be political. They should be based on how well the funds perform. **Passed**

As of this writing, some of the bills are

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

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Norm Sherman

CSARC Florida Liaison and Outreach Coordinator

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Hi everyone! Hope all is well.

As your CSARC Florida Liaison and Outreach Coordinator, I have developed an Outreach program for the 3 Florida CSA retiree units: SE Florida, Suncoast, and Central Florida, that has proven to be quite successful. This year, I have presented at each of their 2 meetings, informing members of their health benefits.

My role has also entailed responding to myriad questions and concerns that I receive almost daily. To further inform the members, I continue to write a monthly update on both the CSA Welfare Fund and CSA Retiree Chapter health benefits as well as Medicare & Senior Care benefits. If you have not been receiving this update, please contact me by phone or email (see below)

I also have helped members fill out special forms, guided surviving spouses through a difficult time by outlining the steps they need to take when a member passes, and conducted an annual workshop in October on the relationship between Medicare and the CSA Retiree Fund & Retiree Chapter benefits.

As I have often said, the success of this pro-

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still in committee. You can check the status of these bills by going to: <https://www.flsenate.gov/> and <https://www.myfloridahouse.gov/>

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MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Marilyn Funes, Ph.D.— Membership Coordinator

We are coming to the end of our program year (October 1, 2022-September 30, 2023), and unfortunately many of you still have not paid your dues, you still have time to pay for this year. Please do so; do not wait until next year to pay your dues figuring that will take care of your financial obligation for both years.

CSA has for the past year faced many challenges, but with the pandemic officially over, we must continue to remain informed and involved on the issues that affect our members. Our Unit Leader and Outreach Coordinator have and continue to be busy on our behalf. Additionally our Outreach Coordinator updates us monthly by providing us with the latest health and medical information especially pertaining to our latest Medicare plan. (take a closer look at this issue of our Unit Newsletter).

I am proud to have been your Membership Coordinator for the past eleven years and have overseen the bringing of our CSA Unit into the 21st. Century. Now I think the time has come to have some fresh and new ideas. Therefore we are asking any of you who might be interested in learning how to do and then take over this very important job to contact our Unit Leader (Dr. Lois Turetzky) or our Membership Coordinator (Dr. Marilyn Funes) and let them know of your interest.

Have a wonderful summer.

Sincerely,
Marilyn Funes, Ph.D.
Membership Coordinator.



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

Gloria Cohen

Arthur Stracher

Our Heartfelt condolences are extended to their loved ones.

Sherman, cont. from page 3

-gram 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.

Aetna Medicare Advantage PPO Plan: Our New Health Plan

On September 1st, 2023, Aetna Medicare Advantage PPO Plan will replace all city health plans (except HIP) at a \$0 premium to all Medicare-eligible members and their Medicare-

eligible dependents. To better understand this changeover, we need to understand what a Medicare Advantage plan is.

Most of our Medicare-eligible members and Medicare-eligible dependents have traditional Medicare, which covers 80% of the hospital costs (Part A)

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Please Join Us For Lunch at Henry's



You are invited to attend a CSARC luncheon get together on **June 14, 2023 at 12:00PM** at **Henry's Restaurant**.

The cost to you is \$10 and the Unit will pick up the difference. You can pay when you arrive at the restaurant.

We would very much appreciate your emailing either Mark Jacoby or Lois Turetzky by June 5th, 2023 so that we know how many seats to reserve.

Address

Henry's Restaurant
16850 Jog Road
Delray Beach, Florida 33446

Email addresses:

Lois Turetzky: gcleflt@gmail.com

Mark Jacoby: MarkKJacoby@gmail.com

Be Heard

What can I say
That hasn't been said
some people follow
They are easily led

Some people choose
Their own way to think
They're not going over
Any lemming-like brink

With each new event
We just wait and see
Which one the majority
Will turn out to be

Will they be vocal
Recognizing the truth
Or is that simply
The hallmark of youth

I want a world
Where the majority is loud
Living in that world
I'd surely be proud

For in any world
Where the majority is quiet
Instead of being vocal
They're inclined to riot

For unhappiness brews
Without being seen
Under the surface
People become mean

So, whether you are in
The smaller or larger side
Make your voice heard
As wrong you deride

By Lenore Kay

CSARC of Southeast Florida 2023-2024

Dates to Remember

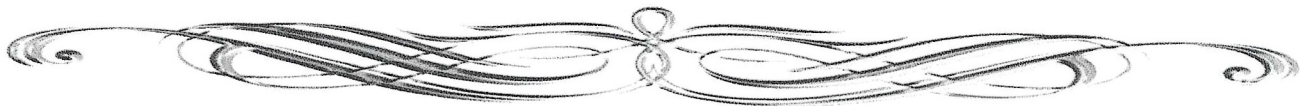
Luncheon at Henry's: Time 12:00PM Wednesday, June 14, 2023. Address: 16850 Jog Road, Delray Beach , Florida 33446

Medicare Workshop: Wednesday, October 18th. 2023 South County Civic Center, 16700 Jog Road, Delray Beach, Florida, 33446

Health and Welfare Meeting: January 17th, 2024: Time 10:00AM -3:00PM South County Civic Center, 16700 Jog Road, Delray Beach, Florida, 33446

Health Fair Friday February 23rd, 2024. South County Civic Center, 16700 Jog Road, Delray Beach, Florida, 33446

General Morning Meeting and Luncheon Monday, March 11, 2024.
Location to be announced



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



CSA RETIREE CHAPTER OF SOUTHEAST FLORIDA

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Sharon Shlakman

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**CSA Liaison for Florida
And Outreach Coordinator**

Norman Sherman

Presidents Emerita

Gloria Malden Kaplan

Rose Bennett

In Memoriam

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and medical costs (Part B). Senior Care & Blue Cross Blue Shield cover the other 20%. GHI Enhanced Plan D provides drug coverage.

A Medicare Advantage plan (Part C) is an alternate form of health coverage that provides Parts A & B coverage, and in many cases Part D coverage. It is supposed to cover the same services as Traditional Medicare. If the advantage plan is a Preferred Provider Organization (PPO) then you can use any doctor within their network.

The Aetna Medicare Advantage PPO plan is a very different type of advantage plan. First, it is a customized plan designed only for Medicare-eligible NYC public retirees. All the other advantage plans that you see advertised on TV or read about, are open to the public.

Second, under the Aetna plan, which is a PPO, you can use any Medicare-approved doctor in OR outside-the-network. No referral is required to see a specialist. Your cost share for in or out of network doctors who participate in Medicare will be the same according to the plan's benefits. Aetna will pay for doctor's services the same as it does traditional Medicare.

Third, Aetna has removed most of the Prior Authorizations (PA) required in many other advantage plans. These include, but are not limited to, MRIs, CT Scans, PET scans, Diagnostic cardiology, sleep study, pain management and radiation therapy. Aetna cannot decide to change its mind and require PA for any of the no-PA services without the approval of the city and the MLC.

Fourth, Aetna offers a drug plan administered by SilverScript. Under this plan, all Part D drugs are covered as well as many Non-Part D drugs.

Those members covered by the GHI Part D plan will be transferred over to SilverScript on January 1, 2024, and those covered by other city health plans will be transferred on September 1, 2023. Those members covered by their spouses' Rx plan may stay in that plan. A process for doing that is being developed.

Fifth, Aetna offers new benefits not covered by traditional Medicare. They include, but are not limited to, hearing aid reimbursement, transportation to doctors' offices, Silver Sneakers, delivery of meals post-hospital stay and a monetary allowance for wellness products.

What I have described above is just a small overview of the new Aetna Plan and how it differs from traditional Medicare and other Medicare Advantage plans. If you are a Medicare-eligible retiree (non-Medicare-eligible retirees are unaffected by the transition), it is important that you read all the Aetna handouts and attend at least one Aetna presentation to get the full details of its plan. There are links to these handouts on the CSA Welfare Fund and Office of Labor websites.

There is a provision for opting out of the new Aetna plan. However, If you plan to opt out, I urge you to fully understand the consequences. Basically, you are on your own regarding health coverage, which in Florida may be very difficult to obtain since your medical history may be reviewed. You will no longer receive your standard Part B reimbursement, or if you are eligible, your IRMAA reimbursement. Further, no more "Valentine's Gift" to help pay the High Option Rider for drugs. Moreover, you will need to purchase a new drug plan to go along with purchasing a new health plan. You will, however, still be entitled to the CSA Welfare Fund & CSA Retiree Chapter benefits.

Understandably, going into the new Aetna health plan can be a scary proposition. But the good news is the MLC (especially CSA) and City have promised to hold Aetna's feet to the fire. Aetna has to deliver the contractual services or face serious consequences.

Have a healthy, happy and safe summer!

Norm Sherman
CSARC Florida Liaison and Outreach Coordinator

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CSA Florida Retirees - Dr. Lois Turetzky, Unit Leader 49th Annual Luncheon Lois Frankel, Congresswoman

AMY LINDER, Sinai Independent and Assistant Living Residences
ERICA WHITFIELD, Palm Beach County School Board Member

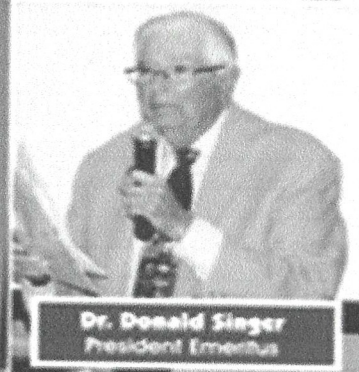
February 15, 2023 Indian Springs Country Club Photos by AL Levy



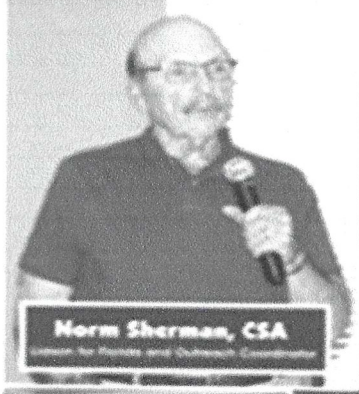
Erica Whitfield
PBC School Board Member



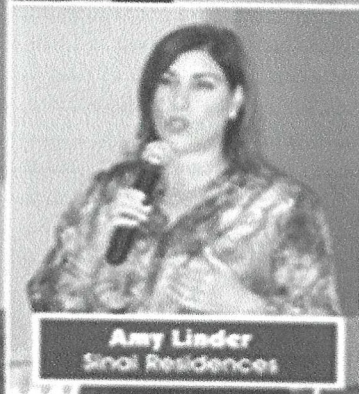
Lois Frankel, Congresswoman
Florida's 22nd District



Dr. Donald Singer
President Emeritus



Norm Sherman, CSA
Liaison for Florida, and Outreach Coordinator



Amy Linder
Sinai Residences

