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1. FEA Held its First Virtual Annual Meeting. Last June, due to the global pandemic, FEA and NEA held their annual meetings through the internet. FEA President, Brian Chance, was able to conduct business and share information both virtually, and using the NEA digital platform *NEA360*. Nearly 100 FEA members participated in the meeting, with retired members making up 11% of the group.

2. Important “House-Wares.” The retired-members survey this summer indicated that Federal legislation affecting Federal retirees is of high importance to members. There are currently a number of bills in House committees that would either eliminate or reform the effects of GPO/WEP on Federal employees’ pensions (HR 141, HR 3934, HR 4540). There are two House bills that would tie adjustments to FERS and Social Security to the actual cost-of-living adjustments or by tying it to the cost of living for the elderly (HR 1254, HR 1553). Finally, there is also a bill that would allow an employee who started with a temporary position before transitioning to a permanent status position to contribute retroactively toward their retirement for those years when they were in temporary status (HR 2478). For more information on these (and other) issues and what you can do, visit <https://educationvotes.nea.org/issue/retirement-security/>

3. Register to Vote and Request an Absentee Ballot. With so many important issues to be decided this year, FEA/NEA members are encouraged to register to vote and request an absentee ballot during this pandemic. States vary as to how to receive an absentee ballot. Forty-six states now offer access to some form of mail-in voting to all voters. Of that 46, there are five states that have “all mail-in” ballots (CO, HI, OR, UT, WA). To find out how to register to vote and obtain an absentee ballot, visit <https://www.usa.gov/absentee-voting>

4. Your Financial Support is Critical. As noted above, there are so many issues this year that affect our retired members dealing with our pensions, retirement, health, pandemic, civil rights, and the list goes on. While NEA works hard on Capitol Hill for us, they need our financial support. Our FEA members have been the leaders every year in giving sacrificially to the *Fund for Children and Public Education*, the main way NEA supports electing pro-education candidates. We are asking our retired members to

consider making a continuous monthly contribution to *The Fund*. Anita Lang, our FEA representative to the NEA Board, is giving a specially designed T-shirt to retired members who pledge \$20/month to the Fund. *FEA-Retired will also send an FEA pocket calendar to retired members for any contribution made to the fund.* Please consider giving what you can. Giving is done at: www.neafund.org **Be sure to list “Federal Education Association” as your state affiliate, and list “retiree” as your contributor type.** After making a contribution, let us know through retiredfea@gmail.com, so we can get these thank-you gifts to you. (Don’t forget to include your T-shirt size.) This offer will continue through September 30, 2020.

5. An Urgent Plea for DoDEA Schools. Because of the ongoing threat of COVID, and inadequate planning in our schools, FEA is strongly advocating for remote opening for all DoDEA schools. An outbreak in our schools could spread through a military community with serious health consequences for children, employees, families and our military personnel. FEA President Brian Chance is asking those members who share this concern for our military families and educational employees to call upon Congress to require a remote opening for DoDEA schools. To take action, please visit: <http://feaonline.org/passport/issues/covid/writecongress.htm>.

6. NEA Member Benefits—How does it really help retirees? According to our survey last June, retired members felt that NEA Member Benefits was an important service, but less than a third of the respondents reported using this service. Mr. Michael Gavin, from NEA Member Benefits, has agreed to host a virtual meeting next month on the wide-array of programs that are offered, and which ones may be the most beneficial to retired members. An update on the date and time will be sent out next month.

7. Watch Out for “Corona-Virus” Scams. Scammers never take a break, but during this pandemic, new schemes are out there to target vulnerable populations. These scams can be related to phony cures, fake tests, your government stimulus checks and much more. Be very suspicious of unsolicited emails or robo-calls. For more information, visit AARP Fraud Alert website <https://www.aarp.org/money/scams-fraud/info-2020/coronavirus.html>
