

**IMPORTANT: Do not view this information while you are on government time, government property or while using government equipment. Do not forward this information to any DoDEA or other government email account or to anyone who is likely to view it while on government time or using government equipment.**

**1. Tax Season Again!** Assuming there are no extensions from Congress, your income taxes will be due on April 15<sup>th</sup>. Most organizations suggest filing early to avoid “identity-theft.” Be aware that the stimulus checks are not subject to federal income taxes. Persons who are 65 or older are entitled to a larger standard deduction. Also, you can take a charitable giving deduction, up to \$300 (if you are not itemizing) for monetary gifts. Also remember that NEA-Member Benefits offers discounts for specified tax preparers to NEA members. Visit [Member Benefits \(https://www.neamb.com\)](https://www.neamb.com) for details.

**2. Update on GPO-WEP.** Representative Rodney Davis (D-IL) has re-introduced the “Social Security Fairness Act” (H.R. 82) which would fully repeal the Government Pension Offset (GPO) and Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) that unfairly deny educators and other public servants of Social Security benefits they have earned. To stay on top of this issue, be sure to get the latest updates at [Education Votes \(https://educationvotes.nea.org/issues-and-actions/\)](https://educationvotes.nea.org/issues-and-actions/).

**3. NEA President Becky Pringle on the Air.** Recently, NEA President Becky Pringle was interviewed on National Public Radio’s Here and Now program, discussing the safe re-opening of our schools amid the corona-virus pandemic. She clearly outlines NEA’s position on what needs to be done to ensure a safe working environment and how it relates to the latest CDC’s recommendations. To hear the entire 6-minute interview, visit: [NPR’s Here and Now \(https://www.wbur.org/hereandnow/2021/02/16/cdc-guidelines-school-reopening\)](https://www.wbur.org/hereandnow/2021/02/16/cdc-guidelines-school-reopening).

**4. Do You Know An Aspiring Educator?** A niece, nephew, grandchild, neighbor, or good friend’s college student? The Aspiring Educator program is a branch of NEA that is open to anyone in a postsecondary program that will prepare them for a career in education and make them eligible for Active membership in NEA. You can find more information on the program at NEA’s [Aspiring Educators \(https://www.nea.org/about-nea/our-members/aspiring-educators\)](https://www.nea.org/about-nea/our-members/aspiring-educators) webpage. You are encouraged to share this information with those you know who may be on the path to becoming an educator. NEA’s Aspiring Educators Program supports, develops, and empowers diverse, pre-service teachers with the resources, networks, and opportunities to lead in their schools, communities, and in all phases of their career.

**5. FEA Retired Members Can Help Our Aspiring Educators.** NEA Aspiring Educator members may apply for an “NEA-Retired Jack Kinnaman Memorial Scholarship” of \$2500. Up to five scholarships are awarded each year, funded through the generosity of NEA-Retired members. We all know that the journey to becoming an educator and then following that path as a career can be more than challenging at times. As a Retired member you can reach out and introduce those wishing to enter the profession to this opportunity. We encourage you to

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make a difference and do so. **Jack Kinnaman** dedicated his life to education, both as an Active and as a Retired member of NEA. He held many leadership positions and we most fondly remember his taking on the role of The Cat in the Hat supporting NEA's Read Across America program. Jack cared about students, especially those who were financially impacted and needed a helping hand, and it is his family's wish that the scholarships created in Jack's honor go to such students.

This has been a NEA-Retired project that dates back to 2002. Scholarships have grown to \$2500 and last year 5 were awarded. NEA has published the [past recipients](https://www.nea.org/sites/default/files/2020-09/Recipients%202010%20on.pdf) (<https://www.nea.org/sites/default/files/2020-09/Recipients%202010%20on.pdf>) since 2010. As an NEA/FEA-Retired member if you would consider contributing, visit the [Jack Kinnaman Scholarship Fund](https://secure.everyaction.com/Ya43Q3ScMUy4MBxSV6toCg2) (<https://secure.everyaction.com/Ya43Q3ScMUy4MBxSV6toCg2>) website.

**6. "Vaccine Know-How"—and When—and Where.** Getting the vaccine for the coronavirus has proved to be a daunting task. An FEA-Retired member in Florida said that she was at the breaking point and totally frustrated, but finally managed to get her first dose. She said that "perseverance" was the key. To help give people current information, along with special links and phone numbers, the CDC and several news organizations have set up websites to assist people in getting the shots in their locality. For more information, visit the [CDC's Vaccine-Finder](https://vaccinefinder.org) (<https://vaccinefinder.org>), or one of the two news organization sites ([National Public Radio](https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2021/02/18/967448680/how-to-sign-up-for-a-covid-19-vaccine-in-your-state) (<https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2021/02/18/967448680/how-to-sign-up-for-a-covid-19-vaccine-in-your-state>) or [NBC News](https://www.nbcnews.com/specials/plan-your-vaccine/?language=english&state) (<https://www.nbcnews.com/specials/plan-your-vaccine/?language=english&state>)).

**7. Cat-In-The-Hat Quilt—Going, Going,----** For those retired members who have been to an NEA Representative Assembly during the summer months; you will fondly remember our FEA Auction and the fun we had bidding on items from around the world with the money going to help elect politicians supportive of our educational issues. NEA-Retired is now hosting a "virtual auction" website with hundreds of items that you can bid on, with all proceeds going to The Fund for Children and Public Education. There are fashion items, jewelry, gift cards and, of course, a Cat-in-the-Hat Quilt (donated by our own FEA-Retired member, Trudy Pollard). You can view items now, but bidding will begin on March 10<sup>th</sup>, and run through March 17. To learn more and become involved, visit the [virtual-auction site](https://e.givesmart.com/events/jkZ/) (<https://e.givesmart.com/events/jkZ/>) now.

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