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1. 'Tis the Season for Colds, Flu and COVID. It is very difficult to determine if one has a cold, the flu, or contracted COVID-19; but knowing what one has is important for how it is treated. Early detection can assist in prompt, appropriate treatment. If you have symptoms such as fever cough, chills, runny nose and/or congestion, get tested for COVID-19.

2. How do a get a free COVID rapid tests? There are a number of ways to receive a free, at-home, rapid test for COVID. Having a supply of these available will allow you to quickly test for the virus and then to get appropriate medical care (and to isolate as needed). Here are some options:

- You can order tests from the federal government at www.covidtests.gov These tests take weeks to arrive.
- Check with your local pharmacy. Visit your pharmacy's webpage, which should provide information on testing.
- Check with your insurance company. Some insurance companies have made it very simple to order tests online—placing an “order now” button on their home page.
- Check with your State's health department. States vary in how they are distributing tests. Visit your state's Department of Health website for more details.

[2a. Name that tune—COVID-19 trivia. A member shared with us that with all of this coverage of COVID testing, she was reminded of one of her favorite country-western songs of 1965 by Little Jimmy Dickens. What song was it? Answer:

<https://songmeanings.com/songs/view/3530822107859311445/>]

3. Tax Season Again! Assuming there are no extensions from Congress, your income taxes will be due on April 18. Most organizations suggest filing early to avoid “identity-theft.” Be aware that the stimulus checks last year 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; \$600 for married couples filing jointly. Also remember that NEA-Member Benefits offers discounts for specified tax preparers to NEA members. See www.neamb.com for details.

4. Continue to watch for online Scams. Consumer Reports this month listed the 3 main scams that target persons 50 years or older.

- The Imposter Scam. Scammers pose as government officials or company representatives stating that there is a problem with your account and that you owe money or they need personal information.
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- The Online Shopping Scam. Scammers use high-priced products or items that are scarce (but in high demand) to lure in a shopper. You order the product, pay the bill and never see the item or your money again.
- The Sweepstakes Scam. The scammer claims you have won a prize, but needs you to pay the taxes (or a fee) on the gift. They often ask for banking information to raid your account.

Watch for the warning signs: Scammers push for urgency trying to get you to react quickly without thought. Scammers ask for personal information. Scammers prefer to be paid with gift cards. Scammers avoid giving refund policies and physical address/phone numbers. They often use only a “Gmail” or “Yahoo” type of email account.

5. FEA Retired Members Can Help Our Aspiring (Student) 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 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. Scholarships have grown to \$3500. As an NEA/FEA-Retired member you can contribute at: <https://secure.everyaction.com/Ya43Q3ScMUy4MBxSV6toCg2>.

6. The NEA Auction Supports Pro-Education Leaders. 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). **MARK YOUR CALENDARS:** You can view items starting March 7th, but bidding will begin on March 14th, and run through March 21st

To learn more and become involved, visit: <https://e.givesmart.com/events/pkD/>

7. Registration goes up March 31st for the DoDDS Reunion. The DoDDS reunion will take place July 13-17, 2022, in Kansas City, Missouri. Hundreds of retirees have already registered. The cost is still \$100 through March 31. Register at: <https://www.mydoddsreunion.com>
