



AFT New Mexico

Retirees Chapter 8029

April 2021 Newsletter

March Meeting

We had interesting discussions about the Legislative session. **John Comstock, Elynn Cowden, Laurie Harris** and **Diana Shea** and others participated in the discussions. We got up-to-date information for that point in time. “Thank you” to all our members who went on-line during the New Mexico Legislative Session to view (or “spy on”) our state senators and representatives. It was a different way to participate in our representative democracy. It’s good to know that we can make a difference.
See more information below about the 2021 Legislative Session.

What’s Coming Up? – our next meeting

The Travel Bug: Have You Been Bitten?

As more and more people are vaccinated, many are looking forward to visiting family and friends that have not been seen in-person in over a year! We have invited Laurie Harris’ cousin, **Sandy Freeland** of Strong Travel Agency in Dallas, TX to share the latest information for safe travel. She will be answering questions. What are airport and airline safety rules? Are cruises available? What documents are needed? Come and learn more.

Back to Normal: In-Person Meetings

Not only are we looking forward to travel but also in-person gatherings with our friends and colleagues. At the AFT NM Retirees’ meeting on April 14th, we will be asking for your opinion on the issue of restarting in-person meetings. When to do it? Should we continue with virtual Zoom meetings? Could we do both?

April Is A Very Busy Month!

Besides the many religious holidays that are happening, here are three more events:



National Library Week April 4 – 10

On February 8, 2019 the United States joined the Marrakesh Treaty which allows participating libraries to access material in other languages from around the world. This treaty addressed the widespread problem known as a “book famine,” – the situation where few books are published in formats accessible to those who are blind or visually impaired. Only about 7 % of published works are made available globally in accessible formats. Now accessible materials may be made and supplied to a person or library, within a country or across a national border.





Earth Day - April 22

Since the first observance of Earth Day in 1970, people have come together annually on this date to raise awareness about the natural world.



“Let’s create a great future together through optimism, hope, courage and kindness.”

- Paul Stamets on Earth Day 2020



Babe Ruth Day

Observed annually on April 27th since 1947 when Babe Ruth was invited to address a crowd of 58,339 fans in Yankee Stadium. He had recently been diagnosed with throat cancer and “spoke in a quiet, raspy voice and needed help walking.” His words were broadcast across the country. On the 25th anniversary of Yankee Stadium on June 13, 1948, he was honored one last time. Number 3 was retired by the Yankees that day, never to be worn again. It would be just the second retired number in the franchise history, after his good friend Lou Gehrig in 1939. Babe Ruth died on August 18, 1948 at the age of 53.

Legislative Update

On March 20th, 2021, the 55th Legislative Session adjourned at noon. This was truly a unique session. It was mostly virtual with the public having to watch or participate via zoom or websites.

Legislators introduced 933 pieces of legislation during the session. Of those, 158 passed both chambers and have been sent to the Governor for her signature. She has until April 9th to sign, veto or pocket veto the bills. Come to our April 14th meeting to learn the results for bills as well as information on the Special Session.

Here are some bills particularly important to educational retirees:

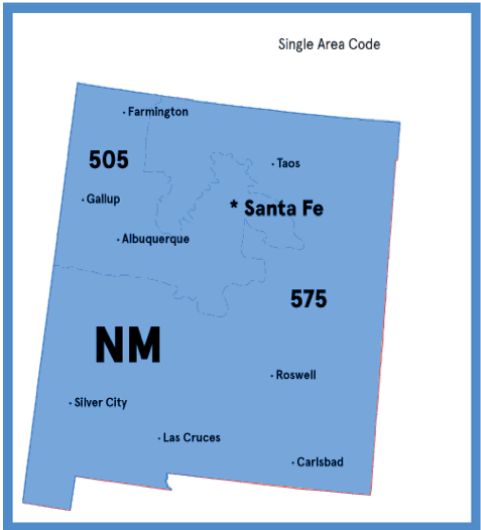
SB 303, Change Ed Retirement Board Member. This will increase the number of ERB trustees from a seven to a nine. It will add a representative from AFT as well as the Secretary of Higher Ed or their designee. (AFTNM president Stephanie Ly writes, “*We want to thank **Senator Sedillo Lopez, Majority Leader Stapleton**, and the members of the House and Senate who voted for SB 303 and spoke up for educators having a seat at the table during decisions impacting their pensions in the ERB. We look forward to Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham signing SB 303 into law.*”)

SB 21a, Retiree Health Care Act. This legislation amends some language and definitions to conform with the Federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

SB 42aa. Increase Ed retirement Contributions. This increases the employer (*state*) contributions by 1% for 2022-2023 (\$34 million) and calls for a study to be performed on how to improve ERB’s solvency without the addition of further monies from the General Fund. (*This bill was amended from 1% for each of four years to 1% for two years – look for another*

request supporting the ERB in coming years.) This bill was also amended to extend the Return to Work from 2022-2024.

(505) xxx-xxx OR (575) xxx-xxx



The FCC has mandated the adoption of a 988 Suicide Prevention Hotline to be Implemented by July 16, 2022. However, to make this change in New Mexico, the state is required to move to ten-digit dialing for all telephone calls made in the state. The 10-digit local dialing is to prevent problems with reaching the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline using the 3-digit 988 code. **On April 24, 2021**, the ten-digit permissive dialing period will **begin**, but seven-digit dialed calls will still complete. On **October 24, 2021**, ten-digit dialing will become mandatory, and seven-digit calls in New Mexico will not be completed. You will get a recording telling you to hang up and dial again using the 10-digit number.

- Your telephone number, including current area code, will not change.
- The price of a call, coverage area, or other rates and services will not change due to the dialing change.
- What is a local call now will remain a local call regardless of the number of digits dialed?
- You will continue to dial 1+ the area code + telephone number for all long-distance calls.

If you have automatic dialing or preprogramed numbers, now would be a good time to add the area code to these numbers. And don’t forget to add the area code to your personal ID tags as well as any pet ID tags.

Suicide Lifeline

Currently the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is 1-800-273-8255. Beginning July 16, 2022, dialing “988” will route your call to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. Customers must continue to dial 1-800-273- TALK (8255) to reach the Lifeline until July 16, 2022

Next Meeting

Our next meeting will be **April 14, 2021** at 1 pm. We will have a travel agent speaking about changes in travel plans now that things are opening up. We will also be taking input on the issue of when AFT NM Retirees should return to in-person meeting. We want to hear what *you* think about this topic.

Don’t forget you can join on your computer, laptop, smart phone and even your old-fashioned landline. There will be a phone number for call-in as well as an internet link.

We don't *publish* the link/number for our Zoom meeting. ***We send the link out a few days before the meeting through email.*** The link will be emailed to you by April 12. Be sure to check you spam/junk folder for our email.

We will also send out the Minutes from last month's meeting as well as a current Treasurer's Report. As part of our regular business meeting, we ask members of review these documents and ask any questions about them before we vote to accept them into our permanent record. Please take the time to look these over and note any corrections or questions you may have.

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