



AFT New Mexico

Retirees Chapter 8029

May 2021 Newsletter

April Meeting

Sandy Freeland of Strong Travel Agency, Dallas gave a presentation on safe travel. She noted that hotels are using keyless entry and keeping rooms very clean. Airline travel encourages people to use their phones for boarding passes to reduce contact. Sandy said travel to Mexico is easy but Canada has not yet (as of this printing) relaxed their rules on visitors.

It was decided that our May 12 meeting will be the last meeting for this school year. We will resume on August 11.

Moments in May

Memorial Day



The origins of **Memorial Day** go back to 1865, when shortly after the end of the Civil War, a group of freed African Americans gathered to honor fallen Union soldiers. “Decoration Day” soon followed. In 1971 the day was made a Federal Holiday and renamed Memorial Day. The day is both an occasion to honor fallen soldiers and marks the unofficial start of summer. This year, we also use it to thank and honor the victims of COVID-19 around the world, and the many medical workers, food bank volunteers, first responders, and frontline workers in a variety of contexts who are working to keep us safe.

Mother’s Day

The origins of **Mother’s Day** are attributed to many people from Juliet Calhoun Blakely and Julia Ward Howe in the late 1800’s to Anna Jarvis who, in 1907, organized “Mother’s Day Work Clubs” to improve health and cleanliness in the area where she lived. In 1914 President Woodrow Wilson signed a proclamation designating Mother’s Day, held on the second Sunday in May, as a national holiday to honor mothers.

In Anna Jarvis' quest to get Mother's Day to be more widely recognized she was financially supported by John Wanamaker, a clothing merchant from Philadelphia. However, she became resentful of the commercialization of the holiday. In 1923 she protested at a candy makers' convention and in 1925 she was arrested for disturbing the peace over the issue of selling carnations as a fund raiser by the American War Mothers.



Mothers' Day, May 9, 2021

*“Motherhood is not simply the organic process of giving birth.
It’s an understanding of the needs of the world.”*

-poet Alexa Davoe

AFT President Visits Rio Rancho

On April 6, AFT President **Randi Weingarten** visited Rio Rancho, New Mexico. State AFT President **Stephanie Ly** and **Billie Helean**, President of Rio Rancho School Employees Union, accompanied her. They visited classrooms as well as the transportation depot.

Stephanie Ly said, “What has happened in this district, which is great, is the district and the union have been collaborating since the initial shutdown in 2020. They have been working together to figure out, ‘How can we get our students to re-enter the building safely?’ and, ‘How do we transport them to and from school safely?’. She added, “So we’re excited to be here in a district where the district and the union have worked so well to make it happen.”

President Weingarten offered praise for the Rio Rancho School district and commented on virtual remote learning and in-school learning. “What you have here is both the road map for re-opening – including the mitigation, the access to vaccines, testing and a real collaboration between principal and staff to make it work. And you see the joy of kids...”

NM AFT President Stephanie Ly Announcement:

“Every two years, elected delegates from across New Mexico’s AFT locals convene to select the leadership for our union. For nearly nine years, I have been honored to be the elected President of AFT New Mexico, however, after this next election, our union will have a new President.

I will not be running for re-election as President of AFT New Mexico, and I wanted you to hear the news first from me.

I am proud to announce I have accepted a national staff position with the American Federation of Teachers. I am excited to be working with our national union and leaders and members around the United States.”

New Mexico AFT State Convention June 10, 2021

This year's **AFTNM Convention** will be held on Thurs., June 10th, via Zoom. Our state union will elect a President, Executive Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. At the time of this printing (May 1, 2021) we do not know who the candidates will be. Stephanie Ly has done an outstanding job these past few years as AFT NM State President. We are grateful for all she has done. She and the team she works with make us proud to be Union members. Now we have the opportunity to chose our State Union leadership. The Retirees, local 8029, get four voting delegates. There is no charge to attend the convention and we hope all of you will check it out but only our elected delegates get to vote. At our May meeting we will choose those four delegates. If you would like to be considered as one of our delegates to the state convention but can't attend out May Zoom meeting contact Anne Pierce-Jones. 505-453-8812.

AFTNewMexicoRetriees@gmail.com



June 7, 2019, AFT Retirees enjoying the AFT State Convention

Therese Saunders, Eloisa Corona, Anne Pierce-Jones, Rhonda Law, Helen Chavez-Hoos, Helen Montoya

Teacher Emporium – material drop-off

The Albuquerque Teacher Federation is once again collecting teaching materials that will be given to new educators at the start of the school year. A lot of people take the time during the summer to clean out their closets and garages. Some of those dropping materials off are newly retired. We want all to know that the AFT Retirees are active, care deeply about education and are here to support students. Retirees help at this event by providing cold drinks and snacks to anyone who stops by. It's a good way to show that we are "retired not tired". If you have a

couple of hours to spare between 9 am and noon on any of the following dates contact Anne Pierce-Jones at AFTNewMexicoRetirees@gmail.com

Wednesday, May 26

Wednesday, June 16

Wednesday, July 21



Thought for the Day

“Good breeding consists of concealing how much we think of ourselves and how little we think of the other person.”

-Mark Twain

Special Election June 1 for Congressional District 1

State Representative Melanie Stansbury (D) is our AFT-endorsed candidate for the Congressional seat vacated by Interior Secretary Deb Haaland. Labor 2021 Program Director Ashley Long is asking for any of our Retiree members who can to please help out with phone calls and/or contactless literature drops to get Melanie elected. There are 3 volunteer sites, and the schedule is as follows:

- **Mondays & Tuesdays**--Phonebanking & Contactless Literature Drop, 4 pm to 8 pm. (NMFL=phonebanking only; LiUNA & IBEW=both phonebanking & literature drop)
- **Wednesdays & Thursdays**--Contactless Literature Drop ONLY, 4 pm to 8 pm, at LiUNA & IBEW. Nothing happening at NMFL.

- **Saturdays**--Contactless Literature Drop ONLY, 10 am to 2 pm, at LiUNA & IBEW. Nothing happening at NMFL.

To sign up for a shift, contact a site leader. Sites & site leaders are:

- **NMFL (NM Federation of Labor)--Kayla Trussell, Site Leader.** 2300 Buena Vista Drive SE, Suite 126, Albuquerque 87106. Phone 509-899-8731; email kaylatrussell2018@gmail.com
- **LiUNA Local 16--John Dyrz, Site Leader.** 1030 San Pedro Drive NE, Albuquerque 87110. Phone 505-554-8679; email john@nmaft.org
- **IBEW Local 611--Yvonne Pino, Site Leader.** 4921 Alexander Blvd. NE #A, Albuquerque 87107. Phone 505-249-1144; email yhawpe@yahoo.com

You have until May 18th to request an absentee ballot from your county clerk or New Mexico Secretary of State through nmvote.org and in-person early voting runs from May 4th to the 29th. <https://www.sos.state.nm.us/voting-and-elections/voter-information-portal/>

A Message from NM AFT Retirees' President Anne Pierce-Jones:

You may know that the Alliance for Retired Americans (ARA) is the Retirees' arm of the AFL-CIO, and that, as members of the AFT-NM Retirees, we are also members of the ARA. At the national level, ARA actively advocates for legislation that benefits senior citizens and other retired Americans and closely monitors the voting records of all U.S. Senators and Representatives. ARA has just released its 2020 Congressional Voting Record. This report reviewed 10 Senate and House floor votes, including legislation to address the pandemic by providing monies to increase health and safety in nursing homes, to pay for coronavirus treatments/vaccines, ensure USPS delivery of prescription medications, protect older workers from workplace discrimination, and prevent repeal of the Affordable Care Act.

Both Senators Udall and Heinrich earned scores of 100%, meaning their votes were consistent with ARA positions on all tracked votes. Likewise, then-Representatives Haaland and Lujan scored 100%. Former Representative Torres Small earned a score of 90%. You can go to <https://retiredamericans.org/voting-record> to see the entire national 2020 Congressional Voting Record as well as reports for each state's delegation.

POTENTIAL THREAT TO SOCIAL SECURITY AND MEDICARE:

ARA advocates strongly for protection of Social Security and Medicare benefits for retirees. On April 21st, Senator Mitt Romney (R--Utah) and Representative Mike Gallagher (R--Wisconsin) introduced the TRUST Act as standalone bills in the U.S. Senate and House. ARA's national office states this legislation would open the door to cuts to both Social Security and Medicare by establishing "rescue committees" responsible for recommending changes to the Social Security, Medicare, and Highway Trust Funds in the name of "long-term solvency". The committees would not be required to conduct public hearings or take public input. Neither the full House nor the full Senate could amend these committees' recommendations, which would come to them in the form of a bill to be passed or defeated via majority votes on the House/Senate floors. Recommendations could include benefit cuts, changing the eligibility age, means tests, or others.

ARA Executive Director Richard Fiesta has stated "The Alliance strongly opposed the TRUST Act. Retirees have earned their Social Security and Medicare benefits over a lifetime of hard work, and the Alliance will fight tooth and nail against any scheme to cut or weaken them. Every Senator and

member of Congress must reject this bill and any future bills of amendments that aim to slash these essential programs. We will make this clear to all members of Congress in the coming weeks and months."

ARA's national office notes that the Social Security Trust Funds can pay full benefits until 2035 and 79% of benefits thereafter, and that increasing taxes on the wealthiest Americans would extend solvency past 2035. They state the Medicare Trust Fund is also solvent, and could be strengthened simply by allowing Medicare to negotiate for lower prices on prescription drugs.

What is your Grandfather's father's name?

Have you ever thought about your family history? Have you ever wondered about doing an episode of "*Finding Your Roots*" on yourself? Genealogy is the fascinating study of our personal history. Our May 12 Retiree meeting will show us how Ancestry.com works. **Laurie Harris** will share with us how to go about researching family history, what it looks like and how to do it.

Next Meeting

Our next meeting will be **May 12, 2021** at 1 pm. Come learn about Genealogy, chose delegates for the state AFT convention, and have fun!

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 May 10. 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.

Email: AFTNewMexicoRetirees@gmail.com

Contact information:

Email: AFTNewMexicoRetirees@gmail.com

Facebook: AFT New Mexico Retirees – Chapter 8029

Web: <http://aftnmretirees.nm.aft.org/contact-us>

530 Jefferson NE Albuquerque NM 87108



AFT New Mexico
A Union of Professionals

AFL • CIO

**AFT New Mexico Retirees Chapter
 Local 8029-R**

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION /RENEWAL

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY

STATE AND ZIP

PHONE

EMAIL

ANNUAL DUES

\$25 Per Person - Certified

\$20 Per Person - Classified

Please make checks payable to AFT NM Retirees Chapter
 and mail to: **530 Jefferson St NE, Albuquerque NM 87108**

VOLUNTARY AFT RETIREES CHAPTER

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