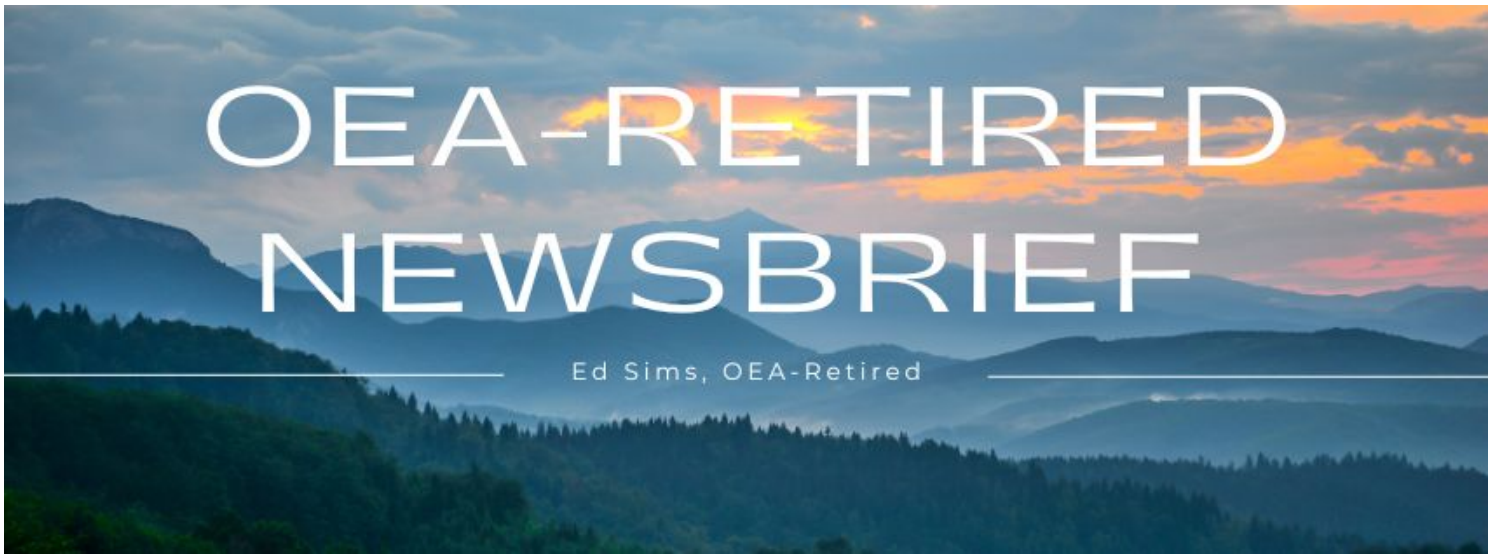


Autumn Adventures, Travel Dreams, and Staying Safe this Season



Welcome! I am the new OEA-R representative for ECOEA. My journey in education found me teaching for 5 years in Cleveland City Schools, then for 3 years in Cuyahoga Falls City Schools, and finally for 40 years Rittman Exempted Village Schools. While at Rittman, I also had the privilege of serving as an adjunct professor with The University of Akron. Through this column, I hope to share information that both our retired and active members will find genuinely useful.

In this edition:

- **Chasing Fall Foliage Close to Home**
- **Fuel Your Wanderlust with OEA-R**
- **Staying Alert: Protecting Our Community from Scams**

First, let's activate the creative side of our brains with a quick quiz:

What becomes of a Sunshine Yellow hat when it is dipped in the Red Sea?

(Answer at the bottom of the newsletter!)



Chasing Fall Foliage Close to Home

Did you know that you don't have to travel to New England for world-class autumn views? USA TODAY's 10 Best recently listed the top places in the country to view fall foliage, and two of them are right in our backyard:

- **#2:** Hocking Hills State Park
- **#4:** Cuyahoga Valley National Park

I encourage you to take some time this fall to connect with nature, admire the changing leaves, and temporarily put aside the day-to-day stress.

Fuel Your Wanderlust with OEA-R

Retirement can open the door to adventures and destinations you may have only dreamed of visiting! Join OEA-R for an engaging conversation featuring travel stories, experiences, and tips from fellow retired educators. Whether you are an experienced globetrotter or simply brainstorming your next getaway, you'll leave with ideas, inspiration, and practical tips to make your next journey your own.

- **When:** Wednesday, October 21 at 10:00 AM
- **Where:** Via Zoom
- **Registration:** Click Here to Register
- *(Note: I won't be on the call because I'll actually be out of the country chasing my own adventure!)*

Staying Alert: Protecting Our Community from Scams



Regrettably, whether we are active in the classroom or enjoying retirement, we must all remain vigilant against increasingly sophisticated fraud. According to recent data from the FBI's Cleveland Division, in 2025 **Ohio seniors** lost over **$163 million to scams**, averaging a devastating **$20,000 loss per case**.

Please keep these current, top-reported threats on your radar:

- **Golden Buckeye Phishing:** The Ohio Department of Aging has issued an active alert regarding impostors calling local residents pretending to represent the Golden Buckeye program. They are attempting to steal identity data, including Social Security numbers.
- **Agency Impersonation:** Criminals spoof caller ID data to pose as the IRS, Social Security Administration, or Medicare. They demand immediate payment for fake "penalties" or fees to issue new cards.
- **Investment & Crypto Schemes:** This is currently the costliest fraud type in Ohio. Scammers lure retirees into fake cryptocurrency or real estate platforms promising guaranteed, risk-free returns.
- **Payment Redirection Trends:** Local police report a rising trend where scammers coerce victims into visiting convenience stores to deposit cash into Bitcoin ATMs or purchase prepaid debit cards (like Green Dot MoneyPaks) to resolve fictitious bills.
- **AI-Powered "Grandparent" Scams:** Con artists use social media data and AI voice-cloning to impersonate grandchildren. They call claiming they are in urgent distress (like a car accident or jail) and need immediate cash or bail money. They often claim they are using a "borrowed phone" to explain the unfamiliar number.

If you ever suspect a call or message is fraudulent, hang up and call the organization or your family member back directly using a verified number. Let's keep our community safe and informed!

Quiz Answer: It gets wet!