



email: npcrea@gmail.com

North Pinellas County Retired Educators Association NEWSLETTER



PO Box 4248, Clearwater, FL 33758

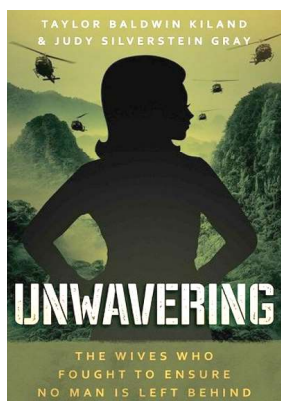
Vol. 49, Issue 2

November/December 2023

CELEBRATING OUR VETERANS



On Tuesday, November 14, Judy Silverstein Gray will be speaking to us about wives who fought for the return of their POW husbands from the Vietnam War. She is the author of the book, *Unwavering*, which will be on sale in hardback for \$30.



A retired Coast Guard petty officer living in Tampa, Judy has written numerous military profiles and feature articles about women leaders for news outlets, including *The Tampa Tribune*. She currently teaches public health communication to graduate students.

To celebrate our veterans on Tuesday, Nov. 14, please wear patriotic clothing of red, white, and blue. Also please bring items for the veterans hospital, and bring thank you notes to sign for veterans.

We gather at Clearwater Country Club at 11am; our luncheon will be roast turkey, mashed potatoes and gravy, green beans, rolls, and apple cobbler for dessert. Please RSVP to npcrea@gmail.com by November 7 if you plan to attend.



On Tuesday, Dec.12, we'll gather at Clearwater Country Club at 11 am and celebrate the winter holiday season with a concert by flautist Lora Mills and her musical friends. Please come dressed in your favorite holiday outfit.

We'll have some fun with a Naughty Elf game. Bring a wrapped or bagged present worth about \$10 if you wish to participate. We'll also have Share the Wealth and door prizes, so don't miss out on this fun holiday gathering.

Please bring unwrapped toys for children ages 3-18 for the Salvation Army Toy Drive.

Our luncheon will include pork tenderloins, roasted potatoes, mixed veggies, rolls, and an ice cream sundae for dessert. If you prefer, you can select the Clearwater Country Club salad as an alternate meal. The luncheon price is \$18, including tax and tip. Please RSVP to npcrea@gmail.com by December 5 if you plan to attend.

**NPCREA gathers on
Tuesday, November 14
Tuesday, December 12**

**11:00 am
at Clearwater Country Club
525 N. Betty Lane
Clearwater, FL 33755**

From our Information Specialist:



Maura Hedrich

October is at an end, and Veterans Day and Thanksgiving are just around the corner.

Our next luncheon and general meeting is Tuesday, Nov. 14 at 11am. Our guest speaker is author and veteran, Judy Silverstein Gray. She will be sharing her book *Unwavering*. It is a story

about wives who fought for the return of their POW husbands who served in the Vietnam War.

This is a great opportunity to wear your patriotic colors for the luncheon and to invite a veteran to attend with you. Please email your RSVP by Tues., Nov. 7, to npcra@gmail.com

We will be collecting donations for veterans at Bay Pines Veterans' Hospital. **Some suggestions are lap blankets, puzzle books, playing cards, pens or mechanical pencils, or warm socks with non-skid bottoms.** Thank you for your generosity once again.

We will enjoy a delicious traditional Thanksgiving meal. There will be great door prizes for attendees to win, and Phyllis Walls will have tickets for Share the Wealth. It's always fun to see who the two big winners are.

Please feel free to invite a veteran or a spouse of a veteran to attend the luncheon with you.

Looking forward to seeing everyone on Tues., November 14!

Maura Hedrich



VOLUNTEER SERVICES REPORT

Name: _____ Month(s): _____

Youth

Adult

Retired Educators Assn.

Community/Clubs

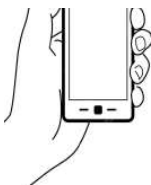
Hospital/Schools

Churches

Friends/Neighbors

All Others

TOTAL



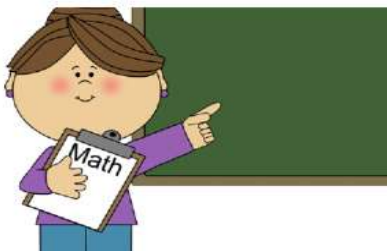
Phone to Mr. Eldon Weaver at 954.895.1073

or email to pegasus_fl@yahoo.com

or cut out and bring to the meeting



Blackboard Notices



...UPCOMING EVENTS

Tuesday, Nov. 14, 11 am

Salute to Veterans! (Wear red, white and blue). Bring items for Veterans Hospital care packs. Our speaker has chronicled the struggle of returning POWs from Vietnam. Lunch: Roast turkey, mashed potatoes, green beans, and apple cobbler.

Tuesday, Dec. 12, 11 am

Winter Holidays! (Wear your holiday gear). Bring toys for the Salvation Army Toy Drive. Enjoy Christmas music and a Naughty Elf present swap. Lunch: Pork tenderloin, roast potatoes, veggies, and ice cream sundae.

Tuesday, January 9, 11 am

Happy New Year! (Wear your New Year sparkles). Bring school supplies for 2nd semester. Also bring unwanted Christmas gifts for our Regifting Silent Auction. AMBA will give a short presentation of insurance coverages available to members of FREA. Lunch: Lasagna, salad, garlic stick, ice cream sundae.

Tuesday, February 13, 11 am

Happy Valentines Day! (Wear red or pink). Bring diapers for Babycycle Diaper Bank, or donate to Helping Babies Breathe. Lunch: Chicken cordon bleu, scalloped potatoes, green beans, rolls, ice cream sundae.

...PATRONS WANTED

Many members who, for various reasons, are unable to attend meetings, take an office, or join a committee, may consider becoming a PATRON of NPCREA. The \$15 PATRON donation helps to defray the cost of printing newsletter, directories, and flyers. Anyone wishing to become a PATRON should send a check to NPCREA at P.O.Box 4248, Clearwater, FL 33758.

Patrons for 2023-24 school year are:

Maura Hedrich
Phyllis Walls
Carole Pope
Linda McGeehan
Kali Crum
Rick Pope
Barbara Seiler
Herb Johnson
Margaret DeMeza

...BRIDGE-A-RAMA

The Spring/Summer session of Bridge-A-Rama has ended. The high scorers are as follows: (left) Joyce Hansel, 2nd, \$15; (center) Lois Newall, first, \$25; and, (right) Julie Beausang, 3rd, \$10.

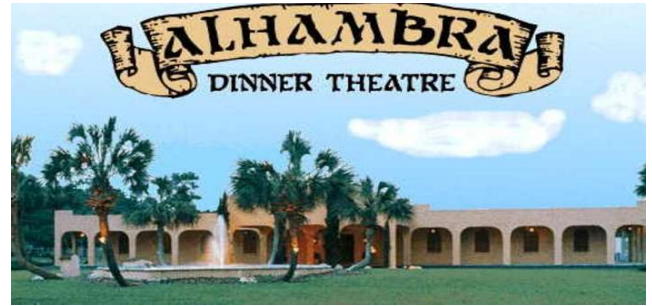


Oh, the Places We Have Been

Maura Hedrich and her husband took a northbound cruise from Vancouver to Alaska. The best part was learning about Alaska's history and its natural resources and great beauty.



Mary Blackmon visited Orange Park, Florida, and enjoyed a lunch at Outback with retired colleagues from Orange Park High. She also loved going with friends to see *Jersey Boys* at the Alhambra Dinner Theatre at Jacksonville Beach.



Sharon Ozbun visited the Breakers resort in Palm Beach. The best part was the wedding celebration that was "out of this world!"



Patricia Tiggett enjoyed "lots of good food and shopping" at Rosemary Beach, Florida.



Jamie Foster visited Asheville and Gainesville, Georgia. The best part was visiting friends and family.

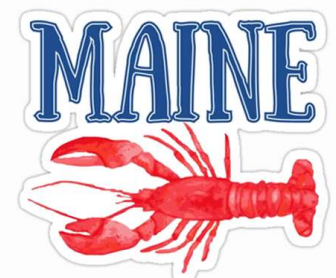


Rick and Carole Pope attended a birthday party at the Rainforest Cafe at Disney Springs for 1-year old granddaughter and 3-year old grandson. They also visited their grandson, Jacob, in his UCF Dorm.

Linda McGeehan attended the 100th Anniversary of SLOVAK DAY at Kennywood Park in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The best part was the family love she experienced.



Pat Dalton visited Maine, where she especially enjoyed eating lobster and seeing all the beautiful scenery.





Rosemarie and Michael Ceraolo-O'Donnell visited Naples, Cape Coral, and Orlando on weekend trips to visit family and to celebrate their anniversary.



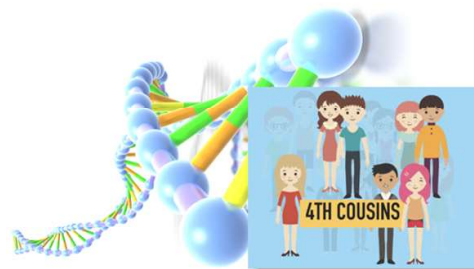
Nancy Whitlock visited Norway (after a two-week Covid quarantine on a cruise ship). She especially enjoyed recovering in Norway with her son and his family.



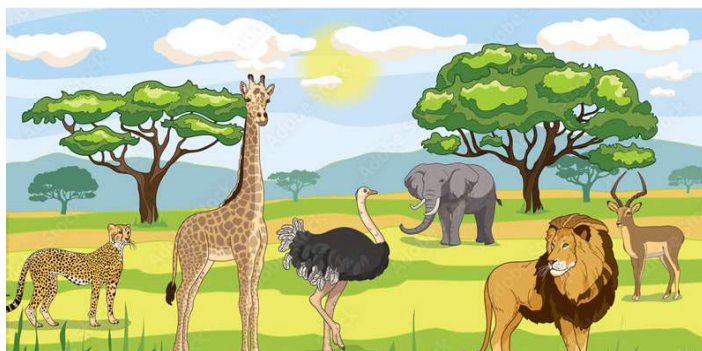
Katrina Pershing visited Villa Rica, Georgia, for rest and relaxation. She especially enjoyed fishing on the lake!



Marcia Lork visited Spokane, Washington, and Couer d'Alene, Idaho, and was able to meet with her DNA cousins for the first time.



Ellen Zherndorfer and Fran Halpern visited Africa, South America, Australia, and New Zealand. The best part was seeing all the animals in their natural habitats in Africa--giraffes, cheetahs, lions, elephants, buffalo, and wild dogs.



LOL Doris Watters visited Sam's Club. The best part was the hot dog and soda for \$1.50

Karlton Ballard visited Oregon, Charleston, South Carolina, and the Outer Banks of North Carolina.



The best part was "touring and enjoying family."

Nan Lanham visited Largo Medical Center and various doctors' offices over the summer of 2023. The best part was her being told she was okay and would be coming home for good!

BACK TO SCHOOL CELEBRATION

Bob Stephens, our president, called the meeting to order and introduced our Vice President, Sharon Ozbun. Linda McGeehan gave the Thought for the Day, which was about living a confident life, avoiding adverse reactions to life's crises.

Sharon introduced Kristen Bracy, who founded the local "I RISE" program to help victims of sex trafficking and exploitation.



Kristen had spent 6 years observing and understanding the problems of persons caught in "the life" of sexual exploitation. She explained how the I RISE program transforms lives, guiding sex trafficking victims to a life of confidence, financial independence, and a career of their choice. She invited us to help support the training and transition of persons from "the life" to their career and confidence in their future.

Many of our members and guests came in college shirts and hats to celebrate our "Back to School" gathering. The UF group did the Gator Chomp.



Another large group were the graduate Bulls of the University of South Florida:



Close behind in numbers were the Seminoles of FSU:



We also had graduates from some other fine universities, such as these Bearcats from Cincinnati:



TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 12

Others schools were represented by retired educators from:

Lenoir-Rhyne
University:



Florida
Southern:



And then
we had Marcia
Lork, whose shirt
advertises Tampa
Bay:



Marie Grein passed out copies of the proposed budget for 2023-24 and explained the income and expense items. Rosemarie Ceraolo-O'Donnell moved, and Val Stephens seconded, a motion to approve the proposed budget. Budget passed unanimously.

Marie also gave the Treasurer's Report for the summer months, showing \$2000 reserved for scholarships and \$4873.15 available for use; it was approved unanimously. Mary Blackmon passed out printed minutes of the May 2023 meeting, which were approved.

Eighteen attendees won door prizes, and two attendees won Share the Wealth. A large table full of shoes, sock, and underwear was donated to Clothes to Kids in Clearwater.



Bob Stephens asked for a volunteer to begin learning the treasurer's job, as Marie Grein is retiring in May 2024. So far no one has been brave enough to volunteer.

Two attendees won Share the Wealth, and 20 more won the door prizes.

Luncheon was garden salad, lemon grilled chicken, scalloped potatoes, and an ice cream sundae for dessert. Delicious!

HALLOWEEN CELEBRATION

Bob Stephens called the meeting to order at 11 am at Clearwater Country Club. Linda McGeehan gave the Thought for the Day about the need to make another human being a little happier, a little wiser, and a little more confident each day.



Danielle Johnson (left) receives a mug and a certificate from VP Sharon Ozbun

Danielle is Children and Transition Supervisor at Lighthouse of Pinellas. A former elementary school teacher, Danielle spoke about helping vision-impaired children adapt to their level of vision and to develop all the skills needed for life after high school graduation. She spoke with great enthusiasm and knowledge about the work she does with children, then answered many questions from our attendees.

Next, Bob Stephens introduced Emily Berry, our new District 6 Director, elected in May to serve the units of District 6 for two years. She serves North Pinellas, South Pinellas, Pasco, and Hernando County retired educator units. Her district will be host to the FREA Convention next May in Hernando County.



Emily Berry

Emily introduced Eldon Weaver, our Volunteer Coordinator for NPCREA; and he is also Volunteer Coordinator for all of District 6. Eldon and Emily showed a simulated check written to the State of Florida for volunteer hours given by members of District 6 during the 2022-23 school year. North Pinellas volunteers led the way with 34 members reporting 6,318 hours of volunteer work, worth \$188,978.86.



Emily Berry and Eldon Weaver

Next, Bob introduced Cecilia Solomon, the Information Services Director for FREA. She said that as a retired school librarian, she is the perfect person for the job, providing needed information to all 10 districts of FREA. Both Cecilia and Emily Berry are members of Hernando County REA, while Eldon Weaver is a member of our own North Pinellas REA.



Cecilia Solomon

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 10

Bob Stephens, our president, spoke about the 2024 FREA Convention, which will be held in Pasco County, hosted by District 6, in May of 2024. It will be at the Saddlebrook Golf and Tennis Resort near Wesley Chapel.

In his FREF (Florida Retired Educators' Foundation) report, Bob reminded us that our Sept/Oct Newsletter featured flyers asking for applicants for the Practicing Educator Grants. Last year two grants were awarded to inservice teachers out of 17 applicants.

Also, 43 college students in Florida are studying to be teachers on \$4000 scholarships from FREF. He added that Cheryl Good has disseminated the 5th Grade Essay Contest information to elementary schools through the PCS pony mail.

Rick Pope asked that members consider becoming patrons of the NPCREA Newsletter and the Member Directory. The suggested patronage contribution is \$15 per year. See page 3 of this newsletter for more information.

Mary Blackmon asked members to send her reports and photos of their volunteer activities for inclusion in the newsletter. She also warned that Pasco County REA with 27 members has set a goal to beat North Pinellas for total number of volunteer hours reported this school year. See page 2 of this newsletter to report your volunteer hours. Let's not let them win!

As he passed out the door prizes to 12 lucky attendees, Bob required each winner to report their name, years of teaching, school or district, and subjects taught. So our winners had a chance to brag a bit as they received their Halloween-themed door prizes. Here are some of our lucky winners:





FREA...
...Keeping an Eagle Eye on
Your Pension!



The Florida Retired Educators Association (FREA) is a non-profit, non-partisan organization made up of educators, school personnel and citizens who care about public education and the protection of the retiree benefits that are earned through the Florida Retirement System.

FREA 2022-2023 Legislative Priorities

- 1. Restore, enhance and protect retiree Earned Benefits from the Florida Retirement System.**
- 2. Promote accountability in Florida Public School equitable funding and uniform standards for all educational facilities and organizations that receive state tax dollars.**
- 3. Advocate health and welfare issues for seniors that will ensure retirement with dignity (empowering people to choose how they live as they age); including, but not limited to, support for Social Security and Medicare Benefits, Health Insurance, Cost Of Living Adjustment, and Affordable and Accessible Housing.**

FREA

8950 9th Street N. #105 ~ Saint Petersburg, FL 33702

www.frea.org ~ 727-577-6400 ~ info@frea.org





North Pinellas County Retired Educators Association Membership Application



Unified Dues: \$50.00 Annually – July 1 to June 30		
<input type="checkbox"/> New Membership <input type="checkbox"/> Renewal of Membership	General Member - Circle One: Retired School Teacher/School Administrator/School Transportation School Maintenance, School Cafeteria. Other:	
FREAA Benefits are fully available to ALL FREAA members be they Regular or Associate.	Associate Member Associate: Any person supporting the mission of the Association may apply for associate membership. (Associate members may not vote as a delegate.)	
Circle One: Miss, Mrs., Ms., Mr., Dr., Other		Date:
Your Name:		Spouse's Name
Mailing Address	Apt./Condo	Telephone—Cell phone preferred ()
City	State	Zip County
E-mail address:	Your Month/Day/of Birth:	
School District Retired From:	Year Retired	Position Retired From
<p>NPCREA and FREAA are your advocates regarding your pension and the future of education in the State of Florida. Would you like to support our efforts on behalf of all present and future Retired Educators, and other beneficiaries of the Florida Retirement System like First Responders, etc.? This money will be used in a non-partisan way.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Yes, I would like to support FREAA's Legislative Advocacy: \$ 4.00 Unified Dues for July 1—June 30: \$50.00</p> <p>Yes, I would like to make a tax-deductible donation to Florida Retired Educators Foundation of \$5.00</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Total Enclosed \$ _____</p>		
<p>Please make checks payable to: NPCREA (North Pinellas County Retired Educators Association)</p> <p>Mail to: NPCREA, P.O. Box 4248 Clearwater, FL 33758-4248</p>		

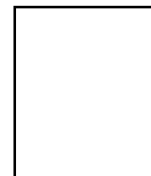
Have questions? **Contact NPCREA: NPCREA@gmail.com**

NPCREA has many active committees. All of our committees welcome new people, ideas and /or suggestions. The work of the committees listed below is explained at our meetings.

Please indicate your interest in one or more of them by checking the line by the committee. The chair will contact you personally.

Volunteer Services		Information Services		Newsletter	
Hospitality		Legislative		Photography (Historian)	
Sunshine		Name Tags		Retirement Planning	
Phone Tree		Membership		Publicity/Website	
Cultural Affairs		Nominating		Thought for the Day	

**NORTH PINELLAS COUNTY
RETIRED EDUCATORS ASSOCIATION
P.O. Box 4248
CLEARWATER, FL 33758-4248**



NPCREA LEADERS FOR 2023-24

PRESIDENT	BOB STEPHENS
VICE-PRESIDENT	SHARON OZBUN
TREASURER	MARIE GREIN
RECORDING SECRETARY	MARY BLACKMON
CORRES. SECRETARY	MARCIA LORK
INFORMATION SPECIALIST	MAURA HEDRICH
MEMBERSHIP	CHERYL GOOD
PATRONAGE	RICK POPE
VOLUNTEER SERVICES	ELDON WEAVER
HISTORIAN/NEWSLETTER	MARY BLACKMON

Email Address: npcrea@gmail.com

NPCREA Newsletter is published six times each year by North Pinellas County Retired Educators Association, P.O. Box 4248, Clearwater, FL 33758. Newsletter staff: Editor, Mary Blackmon, 727-348-0771. Assembly and mailing: Marie Grein. Labels: FREA Office.