



GCREA Newsline

February 2022
Volume 9 Issue 3

GWINNETT COUNTY RETIRED EDUCATORS ASSOCIATION GCREA.org

**2022
NEXT
GCREA
MEETING
FEBRUARY 18TH
VIRTUAL
10:00 a.m.**

**President:
Tina Duncan
President-elect:
Kimberly Rooker
Secretary:
Ellen Sumner
Treasurer:
Debra Ault-
Butenko**

**Fellowship
Support
Service**

From the President

Tina Duncan

Hello GCREA Members: I hope you each had a wonderful holiday and made special memories with your families. We have many reasons to celebrate this year. The Alzheimer's walk was a big success, and we met our goal of raising \$5000. In December we raised over \$7000.00 for our scholarship fund. The January meeting was also a success with over forty in attendance virtually. We heard from School Resource Officer Patrick Reed and learned about the work he started to support students and families in the Archer community. Patrick's work has now spread to several other clusters and a some of our members also shared how they support the school community in their areas. We will also pivot in February for another virtual meeting. Susan Keeney will be sharing about the work of Exceptional Foundation of Atlanta. This organization supports our special needs community who have aged out of the school system. Since we are meeting virtual in February, we decided to alter the schedule and celebrate our fifty-year anniversary at the March meeting. Marlene Buchanan, award winning author, speaker and GCREA member, has agreed to speak at the March meeting. We also need your help in gathering information about our organization through the years. There will be a survey posted on the website for all to complete. Please help us celebrate who we are as an organization and individuals by completing the survey on the website. We would also like to walk down memory lane, so we are asking for everyone to upload a picture from 1972.

As you know our unit has been a Unit of Distinction with the state for the past several years. One of the ways we become a unit of distinction is to grow our numbers with Georgia Retired Educators Association, GREA. Please consider joining if you are not yet a member. Also reach out to your friends and recent retirees; we need eleven more members to join GREA before April 1, 2022,

to keep our status at a unit of distinction. Information can be found on our website for GREA and GCREA membership.

As always, I want to thank the board and committee chairs. They truly keep everything running smoothly. During the month of March, we are accepting student, teacher, and college student applications for our scholarships. The applications can be found online and are sent via mail to the committee chairs. We will also be collecting for the March of Dimes; this is the humanitarian project from our state President, Dr. Henrietta Gray. Penny will be sending information on how you can contribute to this project. There are a few board/committee chair positions that will open this year and we would love to have you join the GCREA leadership team. Please reach out to me or one of the board members if you have questions.

January Zoom Meeting



Upcoming Events

February GCREA Meeting

February 18, 2022, 10:00 a.m.

Virtual Meeting

Zoom link will be sent.

March of Dimes Walk

April 30, 2022

Additional information to be sent.



Greetings GCREA Members,

We hope YOU can donate and/or participate in the **March of Dimes** Walk this spring. Our State President, Henrietta Gray, has chosen the March of Dimes as our Humanitarian Project. GCREA members will participate by donating. Just click on the link provided below, and you may also participate in the March of Dimes Walk on Saturday, April 30, 2022.

Attached please find a letter from State President, Henrietta Gray. This may also be viewed on the GREA website: [Link to Letter From GREA State President Henrietta Gray](#) .

Also, I encourage you to join GREA if you are not a member of the state organization. Some members of GCREA assume they are a member of the GREA organization automatically, but you must join GREA as well. Please click below to access the GREA membership information. Not sure if you are a GREA member, you may call the number listed on this link.

[Link to join Georgia Retired Educators Association](#)

[Click Here to Donate to March of Dimes GCREA Team](#)

What: GCREA/GREA March of Dimes Fundraiser/Walk

When: Saturday, April 30, 2022

Time: 8:00am

Where: Mall of Georgia (3333 Buford Dr., Buford, GA 30519)



GCREA Membership is like the Flock of Geese!!

How? You might ask! Well, let me tell you a little story! You see, geese fly in a V shaped formation. The leader flies at the front of the flock and the others follow, making the V shape. Those who follow are swept along on the strength of the flapping of the wings of the ones in front, no matter where in the formation they fly. When the leader gets tired, he/she drops to the back of the formation and another goose takes the lead for a while. As the geese fly, they honk encouragement to the leader and others to stay strong and keep up the speed and direction. If a goose becomes sick and cannot fly with the flock, two of the geese drop out to care for and protect the fallen goose until it regains strength or dies. Then the caregivers rejoin another flock and continue the journey. (Paraphrased from “Lessons we Can Learn from Geese” by Claude Fullerton)

GCREA is much like the flock of geese in that we too fly together as we meet each month and participate in altruistic activities and learn from interesting speakers. Our leaders take a turn at leading and then step down for someone else to take the lead and continue our journey. Along the way, we “honk” words of encouragement as we step up to the plate when there is a need or a committee which needs help. We participate, we keep coming back and we recognize the accomplishments of our leaders and others. Our Sunshine Committee helps us know when a member is ill and needs words of encouragement and cards of care. We stick with each other in sickness and in health! Even if we need to take a step back every once in a while, we support each other when our members are able to rejoin the flock.

Because we are a RETIRED organization, we lose members to death and then we mourn them and memorialize them, but we continue the journey. The more we add new members, the stronger our organization stays, and the legacies of past members live on with us. So, don't be afraid to be a “goose”, stay with the flock, take the lead when it is your turn, “honk” encouragement to others, show you care when members are sick or die, and when you must take a break, please rejoin the flock as soon as you are able. **Last, but not least, invite others to join GCREA every chance you get!**

Blessings from you Membership Chair!

Terrie Adkins

Then. . .

by Jan Calkins

This past October was my 50th HS reunion. Unfortunately, while I had plans to attend and was looking very much forward to it, with the Covid issues we decided we didn't feel comfortable to make the long trip to Ohio. While I did not get to go "in person," over the period prior to the reunion and continuing on after the reunion, I reconnected and rekindled relationships with many friends from that time.

I had attended the 20th reunion, but what with moves and a busy family and professional life, the ensuing reunion events went by unnoticed. However, I have now reconnected with times and people from my past. For weeks I would sit with my senior yearbook beside me and when someone would post on the reunion website, I'd look up their 1970's self and memories would start to flood. I'd recall band camp and marching band shows, the anxiety and ultimate heartbreak or excitement surrounding prom or valentine's weekend, theater performances and choir programs. I'd also remember times with family, eating together at night, vacations, projects done together and outdoor games and activities with neighbor kids instead of video games and computer time.

Most of all this past 6 months has reminded me of all I have to be thankful for in my growing up years. Looking back, it did seem a simpler time, though at the time it didn't seem so. It reminded me that it takes a bit of effort to stay connected with those from the past and that the effort is well worth it.

There is talk of a 55th reunion in Fla in 2025 since so many of the Ohioans have turned into snowbirds. I hope I'll make that one. But even if I don't make it, these reconnections and memories that have been rekindled, warm my heart and make me richer in my soul.

(Please enjoys some pictures from that simpler time)



Senior Picture



Jan - Top row, right



A First Teaching Job

I'm proud to say that I am a fourth-generation elementary school teacher. Yes, great grandmother, grandmother, mother, and I all answered the call to be educators. A few years ago, my mother and I were on a road trip, and I asked her about her first teaching job in a one room schoolhouse in northeastern South Dakota. It was the early 1940's and she had finished her certification process at the "Normal" late in the summer. The placement office sent her to be interviewed by the chairman of the board of education for a school in Brown County. Her sister gave her a ride to his farm. From there they were directed to the field he was working in a short distance from his farmstead. She and the chairman discussed and came to an agreement for her instatement as teacher for all eight grades and a six-week kindergarten program in the spring. She would be earning \$90 per month, and it was up to her to pick up the supplies for the school at the warehouse in Aberdeen, South Dakota. Upon completion of that first year of teaching she was offered another contract. She told the Board that she had to have \$100 a month to return, and they countered with \$110 and a promise from her that she wouldn't "jump ship" over the summer. Mother was a teacher in one form or another all her life. I'm so glad that she and I had a chance to have this conversation.

Candace Tobin Perkola

Additional Picture from January Meeting

