



# GCREA Newsline

February 2020  
Volume 7 Issue 3

GWINNETT COUNTY RETIRED EDUCATORS ASSOCIATION [GCREA.org](http://GCREA.org)

**2020  
NEXT  
GCREA  
MEETING  
FRIDAY  
FEB. 21  
11:00 a.m.**

**NEW VENUE!!!!  
Lawrenceville First  
United Methodist  
Family Center  
395 W. Crogan St.  
Lawrenceville**

**Fellowship  
Support  
Service**

**President:  
Jan Calkins  
President-elect:  
Penny Clavijo  
Secretary:  
Teresa Nichols  
Treasurer:  
Sara Lee**

## **From the President**

*Jan Calkins*

Hard to believe we are in the middle of winter and halfway through our GCREA year. So far exciting things have been occurring for our organization and we have already achieved a lot of the goals we set for this year. As we look ahead, we will learn about some special ways to give back to those in need in our February meeting, learn more about the devastating ravages of Alzheimer's Disease in March, celebrate our scholarship winners in April and finally remember and honor our emeritus members and those we have lost this year and welcome out new leadership for GCREA in May. A lot of good times ahead.

Believe it or not we are moving again, we may need to change our name to the "Happy Wanderers." We will be meeting at the First United Methodist Church in Lawrenceville for the rest of the year. Our new chef, Chef Michael will be with us in our move, but we will increase the size of the room and will not need to round up chairs and tables.

In January we held our annual mid-year board meeting. At this meeting some decisions were made that we feel will increase the effectiveness of our organization.

First, we plan to change the schedule of our meetings for next year. We will have meetings in September, October, November, January, February, March, April and May. Our December meeting has consistently had low attendance and with the Gwinnett County Retiree lunch being in early November there is no reason to skip October. This is a total of 8 meetings, but this allows us more consistent time together.

Secondly, we have decided to transition to an "online format" for our annual handbook/membership directory. This will be printable by each member and for those who are not connected to the "net" a hardcopy format will be available, perhaps at a nominal cost. For this coming transitional year, we will do both an online version and a hardcopy version at no cost to members.

Thirdly, we reviewed our current financial status and we will be able to confer at least 7 scholarships to worthy candidates this April. This amount of financial support for those who plan to commit their lives to education is certainly one of the leading GREA scholarship funds in Georgia.

One of the big challenges we need to meet by our meeting in May is to be sure we are fully staffed for all our GCREA leadership positions and chairpersonships. Below, please find the list of needs and a little about what is involved in successfully fulfilling each position.

**President-Elect** - This person will work with the President to run the events of the organization for the year. The primary role of this person is the secure speakers/entertainment for our each of our meetings. This person will step into the role of president in the 2021-2022 year. I can vouch for the fact that Penny Clavijo is a positive, energetic and can-do person to work with.

**Secretary** - This person takes minutes at each general meeting and board meeting. These minutes document the activity of the organization and this person needs to be able to be at all these meetings and be able to capture the events that go on during the meetings.

**Auction Chairperson** - Our annual Auction (held at the November meeting) is one of the major ways we fund our scholarship fund. The plan we used during this year's auction (members providing baskets for silent auction bidding), a gift card tree and other "large" gifts to purchase chances on and the annual farmer's market proved to be a winning strategy. We have folks ready to work with this person on the team, but we need a "point-person."

**Handbook Chairperson**- This is a major "behind the scenes" position. This person does all they can to verify the accuracy of all handbook information, makes needed updates, gets the handbook printed and assembles the handbook - (with a team of assistants) and mails the handbooks to our members. There are a number of volunteers that assist with these various steps. *Murla Crawford* has done this job for many years and is willing to support and advise.

**Mass Communication Chairperson** - This person maintains the most accurate possible "list serve" of all members, sends out announcements, meeting reminders and luncheon reservations, configuring the final listing of attendees for each meeting and luncheon based on these responses. *Barbara Wilson* has been handling this position for several years and is willing to share any of her experience that would be helpful.

**Membership Chairperson** - This person makes needed changes to contact information for all GCREA members based on the information provided to them. This person also does the billing for all annual dues members. As the year goes by, this person updates the list of members as new members join and he/she sends out hard copies of membership material to interested retirees. There are several members who work with this person to assist with these recruiting efforts. Obviously, this person works closely with the Handbook Chairperson. *Murla Crawford* has been handling this position as well.

**Table Decorations Chairperson**- Finally, a fun one for someone(s) with an artistic interest. Each year the state president determines a "theme" for the state and local organizations for the year. Our table decorations tie into this theme as well as the various holidays in proximity to the meeting. *Nita Killabrew* and some of her "helpers" have handled this area for this year.

PLEASE seriously think about “giving back” to our organization by stepping up to one of these jobs. As everyone knows being an engaged/active part of any organization makes you feel more involved! Call, email or text me if any of these positions hold interest for you.

Phone/text-404-731-5105

Members, please bring your Volunteer sheet to the February meeting and we will collect them. A record of our Unit Volunteer activities will be mailed to GREA by March 1st, 2020. If you happen to forget your form please scan it and send it to [cellobird@hotmail.com](mailto:cellobird@hotmail.com) by Feb. 25, 2020. Thank you for all you do to support Volunteering for GREA! Kimberly Rooker



### READ ACROSS GWINNETT

In honor of Dr. Seuss’ birthday on March 2nd every year, schools participate in READ ACROSS GWINNETT as a part of the National READ ACROSS AMERICA. This year the event will be on Monday, March 2nd. The day is devoted to reading with guest readers visiting classrooms to read books to students and encourage reading. Schools are very appreciative of being contacted in advance by volunteer readers. You can select a school close to where you live or contact me if you are interested in participating. I will help you find a class to read to.

**Coordinator: Gloria James**

[\[overbrook@mindspring.com\]](mailto:overbrook@mindspring.com)

or 770-963-1927 or cell 404-556-5892

### Upcoming Events

#### Gwinnett County Health Fair

February 29, 2020

10:00 am-1:00 pm

George Pierce Park

Suwanee

#### READ ACROSS GWINNETT

March 2, 2020 (See article)

#### GREA March Meeting

March 20, 2019

*“You're never too old, too wacky, too wild, to pick up a book and read to a child.”*

## SUNSHINE COMMITTEE-----SEND SOME SUNSHINE TODAY



Our February 2020 project has three parts.

1. First is to choose three to five people to whom you can send a Valentine. You have many opportunities. \*\*\*PARENTS, AUNTS, UNCLES, COUSINS, FORMER TEACHING BUDDIES, SOMEONE WHO HAS LOST THEIR SPOUSE, GCREA FRIENDS, etc. \*\*\* Then send me an e-mail to [rnfite42@gmail.com](mailto:rnfite42@gmail.com) about your experience. Tell me if we can share it at our meeting or perhaps on the GCREA NEWSLINE.
2. Think back over 2019, have you become more involved with sending cards, calling, or in other ways reaching out because of our Sunshine Initiatives? If so, we would like to hear from you, a “little blurb” will do--send to my email.
3. Any suggestions for Sunshine for 2021 will be greatly appreciated.

I want to send my love and appreciation to all of you for working with me the last several years on this committee. My husband (Eddie Fite) and My Valentine for 59 years has pulmonary fibrosis. I will be stepping back from doing SUNSHINE in May 2020 to care and enjoy time with him.



**SO HAPPY VALENTINES TO ALL OF YOU AND THANK YOU!**



Please note:

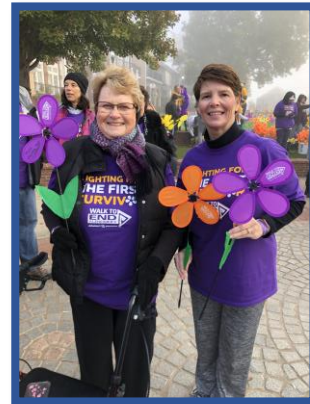
- Our president, Jan Calkins had a knee replacement on January 20, 2020.
- Phil Hall, lifetime GCREA member, passed away Dec. 26, 2019 and buried on Dec. 29, 2019. Please remember his wife, Diane, with cards or other forms of caring. Diane is also a lifetime member and taught at Lanier Middle.
- Sybil Deacon, long term illness, really appreciates cards, was a well-known storyteller for children. Cards may be sent to Hamilton Mill Personal Care Home 2581 Doc Hughes Rd. Buford, Ga. 30519
- Gailya Raines, lifetime member, appreciates cards, was former President of GCREA.
- Jack Britt, lifetime member, former principal, loves to hear from former teachers.
- Jean Bigger, lifetime member, former President of GCREA, loves cards and nature.

Keep the Sunshine Committee informed of your successes and needs.

**YOU ARE THE ONE WHO MAKES THIS EFFORT A GREATER SUCCESS**

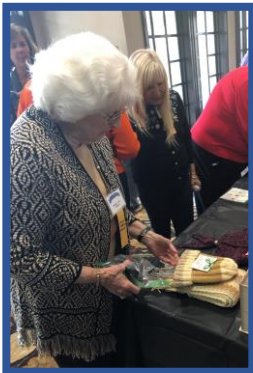
### Alzheimer's Walk Update

The GCREA Team collected \$2425.00 by the day of our Walk on November 2, 2019. With additional collections from Jan's neighborhood holiday fundraiser, we expect to have an additional \$3000.00 to donate and present to our guest speaker at our March GCREA meeting. Thank you GCREA members for your generosity and support to finding a cure.



### Silent Auction

Our Silent Auction and Farmer's Market was a huge success, raising a little over \$4200.00 as of December 2019, to support scholarships for future and current educators in Gwinnett County. Thank you to those who donated items for the Auction and Farmer's Market, as well as all who assisted on this exciting day of shopping fun and fellowship.





### 50/50 Scholarship Match Challenge

Thanks to the generosity of one of our GCREA members who donated \$750.00 to pay for half of a scholarship, and challenged members to match the donation, we are well on our way to meeting this challenge. As of December, we have collected close to \$400 of the matching \$750. I know we can do this GCREA!!! Bring your dollars to the February meeting, and let's get this done!!!

### Donations for Ronald McDonald House

Below are the lists of items RMH requests. Janet Turk will be collecting them at our meetings and will be delivering them in March.

Cereal large & individual boxes	Juice boxes	Paper Towels
Mac and cheese cups	Sugar packets (real sugar)	Zip lock bags
Cups of ramen	Solo cups	Clorox wipes
Coffee K-cups and ground	To-go coffee cups	Spray cleaner/no bleach
Pop tarts	Napkins	Laundry detergent
Applesauce and fruit cups	Paper plates	Dryer sheets

### NOVEMBER MEETING AND LUNCHEON



## Care Giving – We're All In

There is a lifetime of care giving in all of us. Many of you have volunteered as a care giver to a parent, a spouse, an aunt or uncle, a brother or sister, or a grandchild. Care giving has taken on new meaning and touched the lives of more Americans in the 21st Century than ever before. Care Giving now spans across generations. The St. Ann Center for Intergenerational Care in Wisconsin provides care of people of all ages. Visit their website at <https://stanncenter.org/> to see the success story of blending age groups in a day care setting.

Care giving is a large part of life in our country. Approximately 34.2 million Americans have provided unpaid care to an adult age 50 or older in the prior 12 months. If you are in that statistic, I am with you, "we are all in". I would guess that if I asked for a show of hands, about 80% of our members have taken care of an aging parent, or their own child returning home during or after college. Many times, care giving has required us to be away from our immediate family for days and weeks at a time. In addition, there are some of you who have provided permanent care for grandchildren, when the parents were no longer able to continue that responsibility.

All the scenarios I just mentioned compel me to share my definition of care giving with you. Care giving is love and work in a volunteering spirit to serve a family member, extended family member or friend who cannot accomplish basic care on their own. My broad definition encompasses persons that you have cared for and explains the statistic above quite well. My experiences in taking care of my parents at first felt awkward and more like sailing into uncharted waters. However, as I learned how to feed, bathe, dress and maneuver my mother around her home, it became easier and more logical. When you are a caregiver, you may experience a reawakening and a learning curve that will assist you in knowing what is best for your loved one. When you are a caregiver, your brain takes on new information and new skill. Care giving changes your perspective on those who are in need, even beyond your family. Over time your confidence blooms and your volunteering seems effortless and selfless, it becomes a mission of love. Look back on your days of care giving for your parents, your sister/brother, sweet friend or little grandbaby as a gift for life. Your care giving will be noticed and you have paved a pathway of service that many others will travel today and in the future.

Kimberly Rooker

DECEMBER MEETING AND LUNCHEON



THANK YOU TO OUR GCREA 2019/2020 SPONSERS AND SUPPORTERS

**Dr. John C. Binkley**  
Dentist - general practice

15 Collins Industrial Way Ste A  
Lawrenceville, GA 30043  
770-962-3191



Chandler Speech  
and Language Services, Ilc  
Putting the pieces together

[info@chandlerspeech.com](mailto:info@chandlerspeech.com)  
678-288-9770



**Teri Fox**  
4281 South Lee Street  
Buford, GA 30518  
Office: 770-972-7700

**Hometown Grill**

[hometowngrillflowerybranch.com](http://hometowngrillflowerybranch.com)

4856 Hog Mountain Rd.  
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Oliver McClellan



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2130 Hamilton Creek

Pkwy #102

Dacula, GA

678-714-0421

 Gwinnett County Public Schools  
**FOUNDATION**

**GCPS Foundation**

[www.gcps-foundation.org](http://www.gcps-foundation.org)

431 Old Peachtree Rd, NW, Suwanee, GA 30024

(678) 301-7287

*Support to improve the Educational Future of all Students*

**Editor's Note:**

The next edition of the Newsline will be published April 1, 2020

Deadline for articles is March 23, 2020

sharonlarkin1826@gmail.com

**Gwinnett County Retired Educators Association  
1826 Prospect View Drive  
Lawrenceville GA 30043**

**Please invite your friends  
to join us at our next  
meeting as we “Cheer for  
GREA (and GCREA!)”**



#GREAistheBEST #FellowshipServiceSupport #CheeringForGREA

#JoAnnTomlinson, GREAPresident