



GCREA Newsline

April 2023
Volume 10 Issue 4

GWINNETT COUNTY RETIRED EDUCATORS ASSOCIATION GCREA.org

**2023
NEXT
GCREA
MEETING
April 21, 2023
10:20
TPC Sugarloaf
Country Club**

**President:
Kimberly Rooker
President-elect:
Karen Efstration
Secretary:
Ellen Sumner
Treasurer:
Holly Gardiner**

**Fellowship
Support
Service**

From the President Kimberly Rooker

GCREA Members are Encouragers.

Dearest Members, as I reflect on our 51st year of GCREA, I am so grateful that God has placed me among encouragers. As former educators, we know about the caring and sharing that goes on every day in the school building. Encouragers are the people you encounter daily who gently guide you with spirit and hope. I am grateful for the encouragers who supported me during my youth. Those were my parents, brothers, grandparents, music teachers, elementary school teachers, and the band teacher at my first school.

In today's world, Retired Educators are the "master" encouragers. We have forged a path of encouragement like a jet stream in the sky! I recall encouraging a young 7th grade student to learn cello. Today he is the owner of a successful Music Store in Gwinnett. After encouraging a 6th grader to attend the concert, she arrived in a taxi with her mother. I remember visiting a viola student who was badly injured in a car crash and could not move his legs. I represented his classmates, giving him a giant "get well card" they had made for him. The student fully recovered from his injuries and walked into school months later to see his teachers! The fruit of encouragement is hope.

Through our meetings this year, we encouraged each other to seek connections with volunteering, retirement planning, personal safety, school history and to give generously. Our monthly meetings had speakers who are encouragers. In addition, we encouraged guests to join us and become members.

During the year, I watched all of you looking around, noticing how you could help and provide hope. I am now confident GCREA is caring and growing. I want to thank all of you for the encouragement you shared with me as your President. It brings joy to my heart!

“You can do what you have to do, and sometimes
You can do it even better than you think you can.”

Former President Jimmy Carter

“If you want to lift yourself up,
Lift up someone else.”

President Tuskegee Institute - Booker T. Washington

Teacher Tales

In January 1990, I became a part of the Shiloh High faculty. One of my classes was a Language Arts class for dyslexic juniors. We were reading a story out loud from an adapted English book. We were taking turns reading when one very athletic and large young man refused to read. I prompted him a few times and he still refused. I issued him a detention. When asked why, I replied with the old standard excuse, “failing to follow a teacher’s direction.” We filled out the form and class went on. The day after the student’s detention, everyone in the class asked him how detention was. He replied “Don’t EVER get detention from her. She makes you READ OUTLOUD the entire time!” Needless to say, my class of reluctant readers didn’t refuse to read aloud again. I didn’t have to issue another detention to anyone in that class for the rest of the semester.

Karen McKnight

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR AREA DIRECTOR!

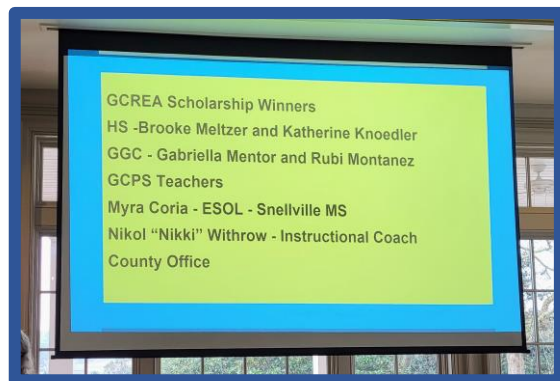
It looks like Spring is finally here and so is the pollen! The warm temperatures are a welcome break from the cold winter winds! It is time to think about the GREA Convention which will be held in Augusta from May 2nd through 4th. This is a great time to meet folks from other units, share ideas, meet the state officers, and generally have a great time. If you have never been to Convention before, please consider going this year. Early registration ends this week, so now is the time to get in on the savings and to get a hotel room reserved. I know for a fact that the dinner entertainment this year will be hilarious! Why not get a group together, pack up a car and have a great getaway where the azaleas and dogwood are blooming! Check your Consent Contact messages for the registration form or go online to GREA and download a form. I will also have some registration forms at our April meeting.

There is another reason to come to the Convention this year! For the 5th year in a row, Gwinnett Co. Retired Educators Assn. is a **UNIT OF DISTINCTION!!!** Congratulations to Pres. Kimberly Rooker and Pres. Elect Karen Efstration who have guided our unit so beautifully this year and once more earned the highest award given by GREA. As your Area 14 Director, I am **SO PROUD** to belong to this unit. I have high hopes for the incoming officers, and I know all of us will support and work with them again next year.

Since April is our last regular meeting for the year, I wish you all a fun and relaxing summer full of new adventures and plenty of down time. When we gear up in the Fall, let's once more set our goals high and reach for the top. Tell your teacher friends and neighbors about how great it is to be a part of GCREA and encourage them to check us out.

Blessings from your Area 14 Director AND your GCREA Membership Chair!
Terrie Adkins

February Meeting



Acts of Kindness with a Shoutout to Sugarloaf Country Club.

As many of you know I fell while visiting Florida in October 2022 necessitating a partial hip replacement. Recovery has been very slow. I drove out to the February meeting luncheon. As I was getting out of my car with my walker, in a handicapped space, a very nice man in his landscaping vehicle offered me a ride. I quickly accepted his offer. He drove closer to me, grabbed my walker, put it in the back of his vehicle, cleaned off his passenger seat and helped me into the seat. I received door to door service. As we were approaching the drive up, one of our members asked if he could take our picture. We both agreed. The landscaper drove me up to the side entrance. He offered to help me up the stairs. He instead carried my walker up the stairs and proceeded to hand me my walker at the top of the stairs, holding the door open until I was safely inside.

At the January meeting, I dropped my phone under the table and didn't know it was missing until I got back home in Canton. I borrowed a neighbor's phone to call Sugarloaf Country Club. I described the phone and they had it. They promised me they would keep it in the safe. I drove to Gwinnett the next morning and got my phone from the warmth of the golf shop, while someone got it for me. The lady at the car check in recognized me from the day before.

To have the staff at Sugarloaf be so kind and helpful to only a monthly visitor is truly a gift. Sometimes a small act to help someone becomes a huge act of kindness to the person being helped.

Karen McKnight





Happy Spring, GCREA Members!



April meeting - Start gathering and bring shoes for “Pledge the Pink” donations in a bag. This includes any pairs of gently used shoes, babies’, children’s, women’s, and men’s shoes. Pledge the Pink is a Breast Cancer Awareness Charity that we would like to support. Cecelia will be taking the shoes to this organization.

Volunteer Opportunity

At the February meeting Karen Efstration described her volunteer experience packing meals for Gwinnett County residents. If you are interested in also volunteering, you can find directions below on how to sign up.

Here is the URL for “Volunteer Gwinnett”.

<https://www.gwinnettcounty.com/web/gwinnett/departments/communityservices/volunteergwinnett>

Copy and paste this or click on this and it will direct you to their site.

Scroll down the event page to “Food Packing for Home Delivered Meals.”
Click on that until it turns green, you should now be on the sign-up page.

You will need to go back and register to be a volunteer unless you have already made an account. In that section you will need to give your information, a valid email, name, address, and a small photo, and sign a Risk-Liability disclaimer.

Thank you!

Kimberly Rooker

Editor’s Note:

The next edition of the Newslines will be published June 1, 2023

Deadline for articles is May 23, 2023

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Remembering..... Hands Are Not For Hitting Puppet Shows

I first became aware of Hands Are Not for Hitting when I was teaching first grade at Hopkins ES. The puppet team was short a puppeteer that day and asked for a volunteer. It sounded like fun, so I volunteered. After one show, I was hooked. Several years later I volunteered again. I remember telling Phyllis Caffey the program coordinator that when I retired, I would be joining GCREA and become a member of the team. Which I did.

Hands Are Not for Hitting was sponsored by the Gwinnett Solicitors Office and was manned by GCREA volunteers led by Phyllis. It presented three anti bullying puppet shows that presented strategies to help young children cope with bullying at home, at school, and in the community. The school counselors were included in the presentation and coloring books and stickers were given to the students who thoroughly enjoyed the shows.

Over the years, we visited many schools entertaining and educating thousands of students. I was fortunate to work with dedicated puppeteers and emcees such as Sybil Deacon, Stephanie Hodgkin, Annette Hildreth, Linda McQuaig, Eddie Fite, Diane Longwood, Mary Long, and so many more. We were sad when the Solicitors Office ended the program.

Sharon Larkin (AKA Bobby, Mary Anne, Paige, Alex, and all the other characters)

